



California GARDEN

March/April 2010

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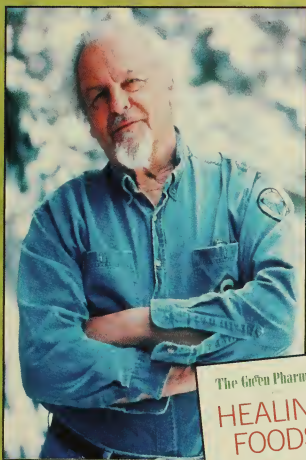
Spring Forward

- Judy Wigand on Showy Kangaroo Paws
- Pat Welsh on the Organic Gardening Revolution
- Scott Daigre on Season-long Tomato Harvests

Plus: Herb of the Year | Heat-loving Orchids | Two Horticultural Histories

Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, AND **Tomatomania**®

March 20 and 21, 9 AM – 5 PM



Dr. James Duke, honored guest, will speak each day on Spices and Other Medicinal Foods. He will also sign copies of his book, *The Green Pharmacy® Guide to Healing Foods: Proven Natural Remedies to Treat and Prevent More than 80 Common Health Concerns*, published in 2009.

- Guided Tours of the Herb Garden
- Speakers on Garden and Herb-related Topics
- Herbal Marketplace
- The A-Z of Herbs Information Booth
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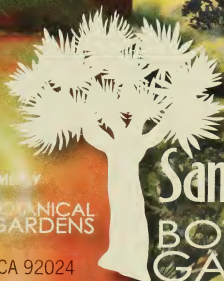
Children's activities, both days, 11 AM - 2 PM.

From dill pickles to love potions, children will explore Dill, the Herb of the Year.

Cost: Free with admission or membership

www.SDBGarden.org

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BOTANIC
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Cover: 'Harmony' kangaroo paw mixes playfully with peachy alstromerias, lavender *Verbena bonariensis* and sages in this planting at Buena Creek Gardens. Photo by Bob Wigand

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California GARDEN

THE MAGAZINE FOR HANDS-ON GARDENERS AND FLORAL DESIGNERS

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President's Letter

I often describe San Diego Floral Association as “one of the oldest civic organizations in San Diego.” I’m on a mission to identify other long-lived groups to find out whether our 1907 founding allows us to claim title as the oldest volunteer group. Kiwanis came to town in 1920, the Thursday Club dates back to 1921 and the Coronado Rotary Club to 1926. Of course, we have to acknowledge that the spark for SDFA was ignited by a committee of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce founded in 1870.

While successful organizations must look forward and can never remain static, our longevity and bonds with local history are integral to the character of the Floral Association. Whatever the future of the organization, we never want to let go of our end of the long thread spinning back to the life and times of Alfred D. Robinson, Kate Sessions, Alice Rainford, Mary Greer and the long succession of Floral members.

California Garden has been uniquely attuned to this connection, making room in its pages to explore and celebrate the history of our organization and the rich horticultural history of San Diego. And a good thing too. There are few places where this history is being captured.

A dash of the flavorful past adds to this issue’s mix of practical gardening information, news and events.

Pat Welsh expands our horizons with a history of organic gardening. We also explore the early days of San Diego’s north coast floraculture industry. History buffs know that 1929 brought the stock market crash that ushered in the Great Depression. In San Diego County, that year is memorable for an additional reason: floral crops became a million dollar business that year.

One of the founders of the industry is profiled in the current “Roots” feature. This is an inspiring story of persistence by a school teacher turned gladiolus grower. Without water, our coast could not have blossomed. John Blocker writes about the people who brought irrigation water to Encinitas, changing history and fueling San Diego’s flower-growing boom.

Nancy Carol Carter

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SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION

FOCUS ON PHOTO SKILLS AND DECOUPAGE GIFTS



Photo: Meredith French

MARCH 11

BOTANICAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Instructor: Meredith French

Learn how to make better plant portraits from a professional photographer who will share tips and techniques to improve your images. Meredith French has been a portrait photographer for 30 years and now is active with Master Gardeners as a public speaker, photographer and school garden consultant. Materials: Bring your camera.

Cost: \$10 members; \$14 non-members



Photo: Laura Starr

APRIL 29

DECOUPAGE FLOWER POTS

Instructor: Laura Starr

Join us for this fun hands-on project class! Instructor Laura Starr, a Master Gardener, life-long crafter and student of fine art, will demonstrate how to make decoupage flower pots using beautiful colored napkins. These stylish pots make great Mother's Day gifts. Materials for one pot are provided. Please bring an apron and a pair of small, sharp pointed scissors.

Cost: \$12 members; \$16 non-members

All classes run from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., and are held in Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego, CA. Coffee and sweets will be provided; bring your own lunch and clippers.

To register and pay, call 619-232-5762. Classes are limited to 10 persons and must be prepaid.

Call Lucy Kramer for more information about San Diego Floral Association workshops at 619-295-8181.

APRIL 20 MEETING

**Anne Fege on
Connecting Children and Nature**



*Dr. Anne S. Fege, co-founder of
San Diego Children and Nature
Collaborative*

Dr. Anne S. Fege, co-founder of the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative, will speak on "Children and Nature: Inspiring Life-long Passion for Plants and the Planet" at the Floral Association's April 20 general meeting in Room 101 of Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. Members and friends are invited to this inspiring program and the dinner that precedes it.

Fege will share her passion and concern for the issues brought to light by the book "Last Child in the Woods" by San Diego author Richard Louv. Anyone whose health and well being have been enhanced by connections with the natural world will identify with Fege's urgent call to provide opportunities for today's children to spend more time in nature.

Louv's book inspired the founding and work of the local Children and Nature Collaborative. Louv warns that children are not playing outdoors as they once did and argues that unless we make nature a part of our children's everyday lives, their mental and physical health will decline. Children are healthier, happier, and smarter when they spend time in nature, whether in their own backyards, in nearby open space or exploring wilderness areas.

Fege is an adjunct professor in the department of biology at San Diego State University and a botany research associate at the San Diego Natural History Museum. She has 30 years experience in natural resources management, biodiversity and habitat conservation, ecology and education. She retired as forest supervisor of the Cleveland National Forest.

Dinner is at 6 p.m.; the program begins at 7 p.m. The catered dinner is \$15 per person. Reserve your space and/or dinner by calling the Floral Association office at 619-272-5762. — Sandra Dysart

News, tips, advice and products you can use

The Delights of Dill

Herb of the year spices up gardens as well as food

By Aenne Carver

Dill (*Anethum graveolens*) is a magical multi-faceted herb. So, it came as no surprise when this herb was named “Herb of the Year” for 2010 by the Florida-based International Herb Association.

Early in life, I encountered dill as a tummy tamer. When I had an upset stomach, my Grandmother brought me freshly-made, warm, dill bread, and I was instantly cured. This bread was no ordinary bread. Light as air, made with cottage cheese and yeast, and laced with dill seeds, it was a slice of heaven. Dill has a distinctive taste - tangy and fresh - somehow like tasting the smell of fresh cut grass mixed with a touch of licorice and caraway.

Later research confirmed what my troubled tummy knew: The essential oils in dill stimulate the digestive process. However, there are more than stomach-soothing properties to this historical, water-wise herb.

The word dill comes from the Norse word *dilla*, meaning to lull or to soothe. Not surprisingly, dill tea has been used to overcome insomnia. One of the earliest known herbs, it was used by Egyptians to treat coughs and headaches more than 5,000 years ago. In ancient Greece and Rome, soldiers placed burned dill seeds on their wounds to promote healing.

In medieval Europe, dill was one of the most popular herbs. Its leaves and seeds were the key ingredients in love potions and perfumes of all types, and dill was used to protect against witchcraft. Dill seeds were soaked in wine and enthusiastically consumed as a medieval Viagra.

Early colonists in America gave their children dill seeds to chew on during long meetings to keep them from getting antsy or hungry. Thus, dill began to be called the “Meeting House Seed.” Chewing on dill seeds also freshen the breath.

For Cooks and Gardeners

Today, dill has been replaced by chewing gum, but in the kitchen it still adds magic to many dishes. Unfortunately, it is not found in most gardens. Indeed, when someone says “dill,” most people instantly think *pickle* not *plant*. However, dill is as flexible and useful in the garden as it is in the kitchen.

Like most herbs, dill is drought-tolerant once established, and amazingly pest free. Furthermore, dill’s long, ferny fronds make an excellent addition to floral arrangements. The large, wheel-like flower heads are covered with tiny, edible, yellow blossoms that look - and taste - incredible when sprinkled over salad or pasta. This herb grows to four feet tall and brings a stately presence to the garden. If you garden in containers, “Fernleaf” is the smallest variety of dill; it only gets 18 inches tall.

To grow this ideal annual, keep in mind it is a cool season herb. In San Diego, this means the seeds are best sown in late fall to late winter. However, you can successfully grow a later



Photo: Aenne Carver

crop; just expect dill to “bolt” quickly. (The term “bolt” means the plant’s growth accelerates rapidly from mostly leaf-based to being flower- and seed-based.) Some varieties of dill, like ‘Dukat,’ are slow to bolt. If you are planting later, look on the seed packet for this important feature.

The downside of bolting is that an annual like dill dies after it sets seed. But, you can harvest the seeds to use in savory dishes, or save the seeds for next year’s crop.

Dill quickly develops a long taproot and dislikes being transplanted, so it is best grown from seed. Fortunately, seeds start readily when scattered in the garden. In our mild climate, you can sow seeds in mid to late fall, and when conditions are just right, they will suddenly sprout. Aim to sow seeds in well draining soil where they receive full sunlight. Dill struggles in partial shade and heavy soil. When planting, cover the seeds very lightly since they need light to germinate. After dill is up and growing, it survives on scant water.

Baby dill is attractive to birds, slugs and snails. To prevent your dill from becoming a critter’s snack, place several open-weave, berry baskets upside down over the newly sown seeds. Remove the baskets when the seedlings begin to press against them. Many gardeners simply plant extra seeds, and plenty of hardy dill plants survive.

As soon as dill begins to get its needle-like foliage, snip leaves to use in sauces, salads, dips, vegetables, eggs and fish recipes. For best cooking results with dill, be sure to use fresh leaves, because

when dried they become nearly tasteless. To harvest the seeds, leave the flowers on and wait until the tips of the seeds turn light brown. Then, shake the seeds on to a newspaper or into a paper bag and store them in a glass container (metal or plastic alters the taste).

The herb of the year is an exuberant, useful garden addition. Unlike most plants, dill fits into many styles of gardens. Plant a row of dill against a wall or fence and cover the soil with tiny pebbles to get a modern, tailored look. Or, for a more country feel, place a couple plants in the back of a border filled with casual flowers like feverfew, rudbeckia, larkspur and sages. Dill even looks at home mixed in with roses and daisies in a lush English/cottage garden.

Dill is for more than curing pickles. Dill will fill in a ho-hum, water-wise border, provide help for insomnia, calm an achy stomach, and . . . it's dill-icious.



Nana Carlson's Dilly Bread

This bread soothes stomachs and it pairs well with salad and soup.

¼ cup warm water
1 package dry yeast
1 cup cottage cheese, room temperature
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon minced onion
1 tablespoon butter, softened

2 tablespoons dill seeds
¼ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 egg
2 to 2 ½ cups flour

Soften yeast in warm water. Combine cottage cheese, sugar, onion, butter, dill seeds, salt, soda, egg, and yeast. Add the flour. The dough should be sticky, but not too moist. Give it a light kneading; that is all this dough requires.

Set aside to rise until doubled in size - about an hour. Punch down and give a quick knead on a floured surface. Place in a round casserole baking dish and let rise again 30-40 minutes.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes.

— Anne Carver

Anne Carver is a Master Gardener, writer and lecturer. Visit her Web site, www.thethriftygardener.com



Did You Know . . . ? New Name for a San Diego Treasure

In September, during the Tenth Anniversary Gala in the Gardens, Quail Botanical Gardens became the San Diego Botanic Garden. The name was changed to encourage visitor growth and ensure the Garden's future for years to come. Leaders of the garden believe that having "San Diego" in the name makes it easier for first-time visitors to discover this 35-acre gem in Encinitas. "Potential visitors would expect more and thus be more likely to visit a public garden called the San Diego Botanic Garden," says SDBG president Julian Duval. The name change also is expected to build membership and contributions to the non-profit organization.

The new name has been incorporated into a new Web site, www.SDBGarden.org. A quick look at the many exhibits, events and classes listed there reassures longtime fans of the garden that, while the name has changed, the organization remains the same wonderful resource and destination for the horticulture community here.

For questions and comments, write atinfo@SDBGarden.org or call 760-436-3036. — Mary James

The Tomato Tactician

Strategies for a full summer of tomatoes

By Scott Daigre

Picture it. The end of summer. While you're away on vacation during the first two weeks of August, your four tomato plants produce perfectly. Your house sitter and neighbors feast on the entire crop. Their full-bellied thanks are like kicks in the shin. Planted only beefsteaks didn't you?

Or maybe this: Your longing for immediate gratification squashes all sense of reason and you grab up only "early" determinate varieties when shopping in the spring. As a result you're in glut mode by July 4th and sadly adding more tomato carcasses to the compost pile than choice specimens to your table. Your harvest is over by the 20th with no hope of more fruit during the height of the season.

What happened here?

Clearly there was no strategy for the season.

This happens every summer. Good gardeners spend valuable time and energy nurturing a crop and then gorgeous tomatoes ripen when least expected, or all at once. While harvest season varies from coast to canyon to desert, the frustrations are all the same.

Don't despair; there is a solution to this malady. With just a little forethought you can plan your tomato crop, your harvest schedule and even your summer dinner menus! Everyone's garden and strategy will be different. But that's as it should be.

If you're gardening in containers on a small patio along the coast in San Diego, you need maximum production from a small number of plants. In this scenario, you'll opt for varieties that bear smaller rather than larger tomatoes. They'll produce more tomatoes per plant than the ever popular but less productive beefsteaks. Purchase "early" varieties, which are more likely to fruit and flower in a more temperate coastal microclimate. Read labels and pick determinate rather than indeterminate varieties, which will be stockier and less likely to behave like Kudzu on your terrace.

A sunny orange cherry tomato like Sungold, (the garden world's favorite tomato) and a medium red such as Early Girl should work well in your milder situation. Choose one dependable wild card, perhaps a bright yellow mid-season choice like Lemon Boy, to round out your trio. While perfect for this beach site, a stratagem like this can work for anyone who suffers from far-too-little garden space.

Whether it's San Diego or Sonoma, the majority of California



Sungold

gardeners will grow six to eight tomato plants in their summer space along with other warm season favorites. If this is you, plant a wide variety of choices to extend and excite the season — and fill the kitchen counter.

Plant cherry varieties for color and "Let's make a quick salad" versatility. How about Yellow Pear? It's almost too cute on a summer plate. Add a grape variety (Juliet could do nicely) to stretch the harvest season, and then choose Stupice, a wonderful heirloom, or another early red variety so you can pick fruits as early in the summer as possible.

(Hint: Plant one at the cusp of the spring season and one three weeks later. Succession planting can easily double your harvest window with a favorite early variety.)

Next, add a favorite indeterminate red hybrid such as Champion that will produce all season long, and striped Green Zebra for its unique taste and sassy look. Mix in one late-season red Beefmaster beefsteak or a classic large heirloom like Cherokee Purple that can also offer an extended harvest.

That's a great tomato garden.

If you garden on an acre in a hot inland area, do all of the above but don't brag about it! Plant large cherries on a fence line where they can sprawl. Find the weirdest of the weird heirlooms and plant them all. Ever tried Zapotec, Jaune Flamme, Nyagous or Pineapple? Go for it! Mix colors and sizes, early and late varieties and don't forget to plant a row or two of San Marzano, Japanese Black Trifele, Orange Oxheart or other paste varieties so you can have plenty fruit to process for canning and cooking. You don't need to worry about production per plant so plant every exciting beefsteak on the market, starting with Big Zac, Mong and Omar's Lebanese.

Remember to bring over a basketful when you and the kids visit friends on the coast for a swim.

Hollywood isn't the only place California gardeners can successfully script a long, colorful and tasty tomato season. There are lots of exciting varieties to choose from but, in the end, the choices aren't nearly as important as the fun you'll have growing these beauties and sharing them with those you love.

Scott Daigre is the producer of Tomatomania®. His favorite tomato is the last one he ate.

Scott Daigre brings Tomatomania to the San Diego Botanic Garden on March 20 and 21 as part of SDBG's annual Herb Festival and Plant Sale. This popular weekend, which coincides with the Spring Equinox, is one-stop shopping, education and more for plant lovers of every stripe.

Tomatomania will have hundreds of hybrid and heirloom tomato seedlings for sale. Daigre, who will share his tips for tomato growing at the event, gave *California Garden* a sneak preview of some quirky new tomatoes he'll be bringing this year. Among them are:

Berkeley Tie Dye (Heirloom) - A new farmer's market winner out of Northern California (how'd you guess?) that's making San Francisco chefs and customers very happy. It's a medium to large open pollinated variety that's light red with green stripes. Somewhat flattened but no two fruits are alike.

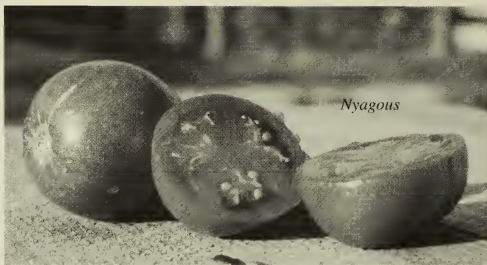
Jenny (Hybrid) - Yes, Sungold is good but this one is good, and earlier, and hardier. The fruit is sweet, brilliant orange, but a bit smaller than Sungold. The vine is tall, light and wispy. Does well in the ground and containers.

Nyagous (Heirloom) - Long a favorite in many SoCal gardens, this unique tomato is especially reliable in the heat and extra successful in containers. A smallish "black" variety, it is amazingly tasty.

Gardener's Delight (Heirloom) - This German red cherry produces in great heavy trusses. Wonderfully productive, these plants bear fruit early and last till the end of the season. The fruit is brilliant red and very sweet.

Golden Rave (Hybrid) - A new introduction, this yellow plum or paste type is a new introduction. Lighter yellow with an elongated egg shape, these plants started producing mid-season but kept producing through the hottest part of summer. Great for salads and excellent for canning.

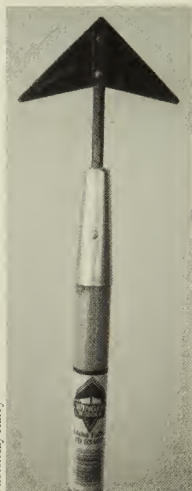
In addition to Tomatomania, don't miss the Herb Marketplace that is part of the Herb Festival. In addition to tours of SDBG's herb garden, the festival will feature talks on herb and garden topics, including one on food as medicine by Dr. James Duke, author



of "The Green Pharmacy Guide to Healing Foods." Children's events will focus on dill, the 2010 herb of the year. (For more on dill, see Page 4).

Plant sellers will include many of the area's specialty growers.

All events are free to members or with admission to the garden. More information is at www.SDBGarden.org.
- Mary James



Favorite Tool: The Winged Weeder

Iwould have given anything, as a child, to have owned this tool to use in our family garden in Pennsylvania. No matter how carefully I tried to work, there would be the accidental chopping of a bean, corn or potato seedling along with the weeds. This offended my childhood desire to "do it right and be careful" - as well as upsetting my grandmother.

A short demonstration by a vendor at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show caught my attention. This tool would have solved my childhood problem and would certainly make weeding easier in my present garden.

You can see why the hoe is called the Winged Weeder from the photo. With one point down I can get incredibly close to a precious seedling without eliminating it. With the two prongs down, it is somewhat like a hoe except that the prongs help me dig deeper and cover more territory.

The handle is wood but it is light weight. The manufacturer, Fisher Industries Inc., makes the tool with different size blades and handles, including a short and new telescoping handle.

Winged Weeder prices range from \$11 to \$17, plus shipping. They can be ordered at www.doitbest.com. Check to see if the tool can be shipped for free to an affiliated store in your area by entering your zip code in the store locator on the Do It Best home page. - Kay Harry



Photos: Don Walker, Courtesy of the San Diego Horticultural Society, reprinted from *Ornamental Trees of San Diego*.

Trees of Balboa Park: Silk Oak

This large, evergreen tree has a narrow form and can reach heights of 150 feet in Australia. In San Diego, it can exceed 75 feet tall with a spread of 30 feet. Very old trees may have broader canopies. This fast-growing tree has a straight trunk that is brown and furrowed. The fern-like leaves are pinnately compound and deeply lobed. The alternate leaves can be 6-12 inches long. The leaf color is green on top and silver beneath.

The common name comes from the leaf shape and silver color. It also is from the fact that the wood is said to be like oak. The genus, *Grevillea*, is named after a prominent English botanist, Charles Greville (1749-1809). The large, golden orange flower racemes are present for a long period in the spring. The flower clusters are very showy and attractive to both birds and bees. The timber has been used for furniture and cabinets. Although evergreen, the tree drops leaves throughout the year which often forms a mulch cover over the root system.

Kate Sessions is credited for popularizing this tree in the Southern California landscape.

The tallest silk oaks are located near Sixth Avenue and Laurel Street. They are growing in Gold Gulch, Palm Canyon, Australian Garden and Inspiration Point.

Excerpted from Trees and Gardens of Balboa Park (2001; \$25) and reprinted with permission from Kathy Pulplava, Paul Sirois, the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and Tecolote Publications.

Orchids for Inland Gardens

These beauties weather summer heat and winter chill

By Bruce Berg

In East County, temperatures can soar past 90 degrees in summer and dip into the 30s at night in winter. But that doesn't mean orchids can't be grown outside here and in other inland regions.

Surprised? The key is to look for plants from areas of the world with similar climate conditions. While we may think that only coastal areas have climate conditions that orchids like, in fact many orchids grow in conditions very similar to those in yards and gardens inland.

Three for Outside

One group of orchids easily grown outside is cymbidiums (*sim-BID-ee-um*). These plants originated in India and China. Chinese paintings from a thousand years ago depict the graceful arching inflorescences with large beautiful pastel flowers. In nature, cymbidiums can be found growing in the ground, on trees and on rocks.

Today, they are commonly sold in nurseries and at some grocery or big box stores. In San Diego, there are also several nurseries that grow them for sale as plants or for their beautiful cut flowers that are shipped around the country. Current cymbidium hybridizing is increasing the range of available colors as well as in creating flowers with spots and splashes of color.

These plants bloom in the winter through early spring. They do well with city water and an open, free draining planting mixture. Most growers today use orchid bark, although years ago, commercial growers here planted them directly in well draining soil.

There is only one condition cymbidiums require - they do not like full sun all day long. Early morning sun combined with dappled shade in the afternoon under a patio cover or 50 percent shade cloth works well for them. They are vigorous growers and like to be fertilized regularly with a weak fertilizer solution.

A second variety of outside orchid is the epidendrum (*eh-pee-DEN-drum*). This plant comes from tropical America from Florida to northern Argentina. These flowers are enjoyed by hummingbirds. Flowers tend to form in rounded heads with current breeding programs emphasizing the pom-pom appearance of the flower clusters. Plants bloom from summer through winter.

Epidendrums grow happily right next to cymbidiums, using the same water and fertilizers. One interesting trait of these plants is that they form a new plantlet on the stem after the blooms fall off. These are called kiekies. The kiekies can be broken off when the roots hang down 6 inches or so and can be potted up to add to your collection or give away to friends.

A third variety that grows happily outside is the cattleya (*KAT-lee-ya*). These are the traditional large corsage orchid flowers. These orchids originate in mainland tropical America where they mostly grow on trees in a higher humidity areas. They bloom throughout the year, though the prime bloom is in the late winter to early spring.

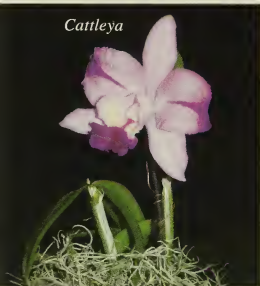
While special attention is required by species plants, hybrids are easily grown outside. Plants with hardiness to both high and low temperatures are available to gardeners in East County and other inland areas. Of particular interest are miniature hybrid varieties called "mini-cats." A mini-cat can be 6 inches tall in a 3-inch pot and have a 3-inch flower.

These mini-cats can be grown along with the cymbidiums and epidendrums. While they would be quite happy where the nighttime low temperatures in the winter do not get below 40 degrees, there are hybrid types that can handle temperatures into the 20s and 30s.



Photos: Bruce Berg

Cymbidium



Cattleya



Epidendrum

All of these orchids prefer brightly lit growing areas, but not direct sunlight in the afternoons. They also should be protected from the cold winter rains. And all are hardy to temperatures in the low 30s.

Shop the Sale, Show

So, if a gardener wishes to try growing orchids outside or in, where do they go to find plants and advice on their care? Both will be in plentiful supply at the Orchid Show and Plant Sale hosted by the San Diego County Orchid Society March 26-28 at the Scottish Rite Center in Mission Valley.

The Society will have about 30,000 square feet of exhibit space for plants that members have grown and entered for award judging as well as for vendors who will be offering thousands of plants for sale. Many vendors are from San Diego County, as well as from Hawaii and other states and other countries. Speakers throughout the show will discuss how to grow orchids. There will be many amateurs as well as experts available to talk with about the plants.

The Society's Website, www.sdorchids.com, also has information on the cultural requirements of many varieties of orchids as well as information on upcoming shows and plant sales.

—San Diego County Orchid Society member Bruce Berg and his wife Carol grow many varieties of orchids outside their Santee home.



Photo: Rachel Cobb

Cymbidium

Judy's Perennials

By Judy Wigand

Amazing Anigozanthos

Kangaroo paws hop from Down Under into drought-tolerant gardens here

Here's a global trivia question for you: What certain coastal sections in the southern hemisphere have something in common with the California coastline?

The answer? Land in the same 30 -45 degrees of latitude as the California coast shares our Mediterranean-style climate, giving us a mutual bond.

What even stronger bond links us to one of these areas, namely the coast of Western Australia? This region parallels 120 degrees east longitude, while the California coast lies along 120 degrees west longitude, making Western Australia literally the land down under.

With this geography in mind, it's no wonder so many Australian plants are so compatible in Southern California gardens.

Just as koalas and kangaroos are identified with their Australian homeland, plants can easily do the same. One spectacular example is Western Australia's state floral emblem, the red and green *Anigozanthos manglesii*, or kangaroo paw.

The untypical flowers of the kangaroo paw, or *Anigozanthos* (ann-nee-go-zan-thus), may be viewed by some as a horticultural oddity, but early on plant breeders had the foresight to see their



'Big Red'

horticultural potential. The cut-flower trade adores their tall erect stalks with those strangely shaped velvety flowers that resemble a kangaroo foot. As a garden plant, they have proven themselves to be very showy companion plants, fitting right into a drought-tolerant perennial garden.

Hummingbirds have never been so happy since kangaroo paws were introduced to our gardens in the late 1970s. Their bright colors, tubular flowers and tall flower stalks attract hummers like a magnet.

To discover which of the many *Anigozanthos* species were the strongest growers in cultivation took a considerable amount of trialing. The evergreen species *Anigozanthos flavidus* has proven without question to be the longest lived, most vigorous and most disease resistant of all other *Anigozanthos*.

Plant breeders refined this promising species by collecting its seed from the wild, growing it, then selecting and cross pollinating the best of those seedlings. By repeating this process again and again, they eventually created several very magnificent cultivars of *A. flavidus*. *Anigozanthos flavidus* also became the main species used for hybridizing with other more difficult to grow species. This created stronger growing kangaroo paw hybrids with a wider range of colors and sizes.

Tall and beautiful

Two very tall upright hybrids of *A. flavidus* usually available in nurseries are the vivid yellow flowering 'Harmony' and the deep ruby red known as 'Big Red.' Both these hybrids are a joy to grow in the ground or in containers.

A. 'Big Red' is a vigorous evergreen plant with large bright velvety red flowers on tall stalks to about 5 feet tall. 'Harmony' is



'Pink Joey'



'Harmony'

Photo: Bob Wyland

also a vigorous evergreen plant with bright lemon-yellow flowers on stems rising to about 4 feet tall. Both plants are very disease resistant and have proven long lived in garden culture here and in their native homeland of Western Australia.

Their medium green foliage is slender and sword-like, forming a mature clump of about three feet high and wide. Their strong flower stalks rise well above their leaves and need no staking.

They look especially nice when backed up with tall growing *Verbena bonariensis* with its airy branching stems of purple flowers. Brightly colored penstemon would make an attractive foreground plant, since it appreciates the same sharp drainage as the kangaroo paws. *Penstemon* 'Midnight,' a dark purple form, is stunning when placed with yellow flowering A. 'Harmony.'

One of my personal favorites is *Anigozanthos* 'Pink Joey.' It started out as a natural pink form of *A. flavidus* found growing in the wild and its seed was soon added to the seed bank of the Western Australian Wildflower Society. An outstanding short form of pink *Anigozanthos* was grown from seed distributed from this seed bank by Mrs. M. Fisch of East Doncaster, Victoria. In 1973, after noticing a superior seedling's shorter form and attractive pink paws, she officially registered it with the Australian Cultivar Registration Authority, appropriately naming it 'Pink Joey.'

There are taller forms of pink kangaroo paws that sometimes are called Pink Joey, but the size of the plant, which reaches a total height of about three feet, is the best way of identifying the original cultivar. Sometimes when I spot an impostor I'm tempted to say, "Will the true 'Pink Joey' please stand up?"

Shorter forms of kangaroo paws known as the Bush Series and reaching only 2 to 3 feet tall have become very popular. They offer a variety of glowing colors such as 'Bush Nugget,' a two-tone yellow and orange; the very popular 'Bush Pearl' offering bright pink paws; and slightly taller growing 'Bush Tango' with bright orange paws. There's even a green flower form known as 'Bush Emerald.'

These lower growing kangaroo paws are perfect for the edge of a border or when combined with low growing succulents as hens and chicks (*Echeveria elegans*). Since this planting is beginning

to sound a little like a farmyard, why not grow some lamb's ears and donkey tail spurge with it. All make a really good match.

I've noticed that many of the kangaroo paws found in nurseries today have little or no specific identification. At best they are labeled "Kangaroo Paw Hybrid," which can be confusing. If the plant is in flower and you like it, just buy it. Anymore it doesn't much matter what hybrid it is since most all hybrids come from *A. flavidus*, that amazing species that has dominated breeding programs for decades.

Drainage is key

Growing kangaroo paws is easy and rewarding as long as they don't have an abundance of water and plant food. The plant can store moisture in its rhizomes, root-like underground stems, which allows it to go dry for several weeks at a time.

This doesn't mean that the plant should be allowed to go entirely dry between waterings but that it fits right into a drought tolerant garden that has low water requirements. If it dries out while flowering from early spring through summer, you will lose the flowers. Cutting back spent stems to the base prolongs the flowering seasons.

Kangaroo paws require good drainage, so avoid planting them in clay soils that are watered frequently. They also make excellent container plants when planted with a potting mix that drains well, such as Uncle Malcolm's Potting Soil by Whitney Farms. Place plants in full sun to light, broken shade.

During the winter rains is the best time to apply a moderate amount of nitrogen-only plant food, since this is the beginning of its active growth period.

Giving kangaroo paws a rich plant food with equal amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium can harm the plant and even cause it to die suddenly. Australian plants don't like phosphorus; it literally makes them sick.

Judy Wigand is a lecturer and freelance garden writer. She operated Judy's Perennials, a specialty nursery, for 15 years in San Marcos.

Growing Grounds

Encinitas' floral industry takes root with the help of water

By John Blocker

"...The San Dieguito settlement is the center of a very fine section of the country which is growing rapidly in population and improvements. The soil is capable of high cultivation...."

*— Picturesque San Diego with Historical and Descriptive Notes
by Douglas Gunn (Knight and Lonard Co., printers, Chicago, 1887)*

In 1883, after seeing an advertisement much like this one, 11 members of the Hammond family travelled by train from St. Louis to Encinitas with hope of planting a fig orchard. Their arrival doubled the size of the city. The Hammonds bought the 320-acre Sunset Ranch, but their dream was never fulfilled.

Forty years later, what had been the Hammonds' land would bloom, as a floral industry began to thrive in this coastal community. The difference between success then and failure decades earlier was water availability, made possible by damming the San Dieguito River and building a pipeline. Only with water could the area's aspirations for a prosperous agricultural enterprise become reality.

The great rains of 1916 in San Diego County initiated the events that brought water to Encinitas. That year, the San Diego City Council had contracted with "rainmaker" Charles Hatfield to end a prolonged drought, but when a deluge of rain caused the Sweetwater Dam to overflow and the Otay Dam to break, city officials refused to give Hatfield his \$10,000 fee. These rains also caused widespread destruction along the San Dieguito River, including damage to the railroad lines and bridges.

While repairing these lines, William Hodges, vice president of the Santa Fe Railroad Company, decided to build a dam at the narrows in the canyon above Rancho Santa Fe to protect his rights of way from future floods. The railroad company formed a joint venture with William Henshaw, who had purchased the water rights and dam sites along the river (he later built Lake Henshaw). The dam was finished by 1918, and the lake, christened Lake Hodges after the railroad vice-president, began to supply water to Rancho Santa Fe, Solana Beach and Del Mar. Initially, the Japanese vegetable farmers in Rancho Santa Fe were the only agricultural users of the water.



Hammond land with natural pond from Cottonwood Creek.

Water from Lake Hodges was not brought to Encinitas until 1923. Even as late as 1922, Encinitas had only about 40 residents and the outskirts of the town had fewer than 20 inhabitants. In 1923 the San Dieguito Water District built a pipeline to Encinitas from Lake Hodges and the area began to fulfill its promise.

Colonel Ed Fletcher, a prominent land and water developer, was given much of the credit for the development of the Lake Hodges water system. In 1924 in a letter to Fletcher, Hodges wrote, "You were its first, and is (sic) its last and only president of the San Dieguito Water Company. May I take this occasion to say, that, while I have received considerable 'honorable mention' in connection with the results obtained, you are responsible for the development of the Lake Hodges System and of the country it serves."

One of the first flower growers to take advantage of the newly imported water was the Ecke family. Albert Ecke had arrived in Hollywood from Germany in 1900. He had owned a health spa in Europe and was on his way with his family to the South Pacific to open a similar business. Instead, the family began growing flowers in the Hollywood area. Albert and his son Paul, Sr., soon became interested in poinsettias, a plant introduced into the United States



from Mexico by Joel Robert Poinsett in the early 1800s. They grew the plants in unused lots along Sunset Boulevard and began to sell the flowers along the roadside. The red flowers in the winter soon became a holiday attraction.

In 1923, realizing they might lose the leases on their fields in Hollywood due to population growth in the area, the Eckes bought the Sunset Ranch from the Hammonds and began to relocate their business to Encinitas. They were lured by the ample water supply, the cooling ocean breezes and the rail line to ship plants.

They lost their first crop in Encinitas in late 1924 to a scorching Santa Ana wind and then a week later lost most of their crop in Hollywood to frost. They salvaged only enough growing stock for the next year. Despite these setbacks, their business in Encinitas prospered and the Ecke family would become the most prominent poinsettia grower the world.

In 1924, Judge Thomas McLoughlin moved his flower-growing business from Seattle to Encinitas. An interview given during the 1940s relates how he decided to come to Encinitas and how he began to promote the area. The interview is among the documents archived at the Encinitas Historical Society.

"I hunted the west coast for a rich loam soil suitable for growing bulbs," McLoughlin told the interviewer. "When I moved to Leucadia in 1924, I can only remember seven homes in the area. After arriving in Leucadia, I sent to Holland for 98 crates of bulbs. These were the first ever planted in this district.

"In 1925 I helped form the first Encinitas Flower Show. It was held where the Streeter Blair Antique Shop once was. It was held in June - I can remember it well. The night before a terrific storm hit the area. I stood in the middle of the tent with my dog sure the entire show would be ruined. It was a great success.

"Most of the Flowers for this show came from out of the area; flowers were shipped from Portland, Seattle and Los Angeles. One of the people who sent flowers was my friend, Donald Briggs, Sr., whom I had done business with in Seattle. He sent many flowers to the show.

"I later induced him to come to this area. His son, Don, is now one of the leading growers of the county. At these early flower shows we received state wide publicity. John Bacon, then mayor of San Diego, opened the show. We had state and national publicity - the shows were a wonderful success and should be revived."

With encouragement from Thomas McLoughlin, Donald Briggs, Sr., came to Encinitas in 1926 with his mother, Elizabeth Briggs, to grow gladiolus. Needing a loan when he arrived, Briggs went to the newly opened Bank of Solana Beach. He quickly received a \$5,000 unsecured loan. The man who gave him the loan was the bank president, Colonel Ed Fletcher. Donald grew his business and his mother became the most renowned gladiolus hybridizer in the United States. (For more about Elizabeth Briggs, see Page 14)

The seeds had been sown and the floral industry in Encinitas was beginning to take root.

Next: Mid-Winter Flower Show

Other Sources:

San Diego Historical Society Biographies: Colonel Ed Fletcher

Encinitas Historical Society Archives and Website, encinitashistoricalsociety.com

Robert Melvin, *Profiles in Flowers: The Story of San Diego County Floriculture*, Encinitas, CA: Paul Ecke Ranch Press, 1989.

John Blocker worked with the agricultural industry in San Diego for 31 years.

"It's the bible of local gardening."

Pat Welsh's SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ORGANIC GARDENING: Month-By-Month

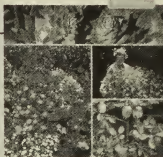
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ROOTS

Profiles in Horticultural History

By Nancy Carol Carter

Elizabeth A. Briggs

In the same year that President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, the future Elizabeth Briggs was born in Illinois. She grew up to profoundly influence Southern California horticulture, but traveled a long road on the way to becoming the "Dean of American Hybridizers" and a founder of the San Diego County flower industry. She was 51 years old before beginning her career as a gladiolus grower and breeder.

The young Elizabeth had become a teacher and moved to Seattle where she met Charles Briggs. The peripatetic couple had one son, Donald, and eventually settled in Sacramento. Deciding to return to work as her son matured, Elizabeth sat for the California teachers' licensing examination in 1913, only to be told she was too old to return to the classroom. Vexed, she cast about for enjoyable work that could contribute to the family income.

One day her husband came home waving a clipping from *Country Gentleman* magazine. It described the quick and easy money to be made from gladiolus bulb production: simply plant bulbs and then sell their naturally reproduced offspring. The idea captured Elizabeth's imagination. She determined on the spot to become a gladiolus grower. "I can do it. I will do it," she recalled saying. After a careful review of family finances, the couple allocated \$8 to begin the new venture. With persistence and a revealed talent for hybridization, Elizabeth Briggs parlayed that \$8 capital investment into a major floral business.



Gladiolus hybridizer Elizabeth Briggs and her gardening equipment: a basket containing cups of pollen, and the hoe, which she has used for 30 years.
— Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 27, 1952

Success initially proved elusive. Briggs grew a first crop in her backyard, then expanded to a next door vacant lot. After four years, she had 500,000 bulbs on hand and rented a five-acre plot, hoping to harvest a fortune in bulbs. Instead, the crop was devastated by an infestation of wireworms, the destructive larva of the click beetle.

Her husband and son helped cultivate the glads during their off-hours, but World War I took both away from Sacramento in 1918. They suggested she put the bulb business on hold, but Elizabeth stubbornly continued on her own, leasing land near Lodi and doing almost all the work of planting, weeding and irrigating. She lost 25 pounds over the summer, but harvested a handsome crop. A sale of \$2,000 in bulbs and an abundant stock for replanting boosted her spirits. However, the fruitful Lodi land lease was unavailable for a second season and newly rented acreage was infested with wireworms, again setting back profits and reducing her stock of bulbs.

Elizabeth Ament Briggs

Expert gladiolus hybridizer and pioneer of the San Diego County flower industry.

Born: 1863 in Princeton, Illinois

Died: 1960 in Encinitas, California

DIG DEEPER WITH:

Peggi Ridgway and Jan Works, *Sending Flowers to America: Stories of the Los Angeles Flower Market and the People Who Built an American Floral Industry*,

Los Angeles: American Florists' Exchange, Ltd, 2008

Robert Melvin, *Profiles in Flowers: The Story of San Diego County Floriculture*, Encinitas, CA: Paul Ecke Ranch Press, 1989.



Photo: Rachel Cobb



Elizabeth Briggs celebrated her 89th birthday by digging up a harvest of 5000 bulbs. — Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 27, 1952

The next year, the reunited Briggs family moved to Monterey, planting on new land and camping out all summer under nearby oak trees to save money. They were rewarded with a bountiful crop, worth \$17,000. Saving many of the bulbs for their largest planting ever, the family rented land in Carmel Valley and hoped for a bonanza. Pests destroyed most of the bulbs.

Continuing south, the Briggs planted their next crop near Chino. Nematodes attacked. The next stop was San Onofre, a move that corresponded with a development in agricultural technology. Using the new methods for fumigating soils, the Briggs produced a bumper crop. Seeing the generous reproduction of gladiolus bulbs when pest free, Elizabeth Briggs thought the promise of *Country Gentleman* was coming true at last.

Settling in the Encinitas area in 1926, the restless Briggs family had found a permanent home for their gladiolus business. "This is the place," Elizabeth later said about her corner of San Diego County, "this is the wonder spot."

Donald Briggs assumed responsibility for the cut-flower and bulb-growing business while his mother focused on providing new gladiolus hybrids, work she had begun in Monterey. At an age when most people retire from work, Elizabeth Briggs ramped up for another 30 years of award-winning flower breeding.

Her instincts regarding flower stock were demonstrated in 1913 when making the family's initial \$8 investment in gladioli. To the dismay of her husband, she had spent \$3 on just one bulb. The superior pink flowers and vigorous progeny of the expensive 'Mrs. Frank Pendleton' repaid that investment many times over. She thereafter invested only in high quality bulbs and ruthlessly discarded inferior stock.

Briggs called her testing grounds "Seventh Heaven" and described her life in horticulture as play, not work. She took advantage of the 1930 Plant Patent Act to protect the rights to some of her cultivars and proudly beat the odds of producing gladioli in three primary colors after developing a clear yellow bulb by breeding from a single bulb of a wild African gladiolus found near Victoria Falls. "Golden Harvest" was awarded one of her two gold medals from the New England Gladiolus Society and resulted in a stream of visiting horticulturists desiring to see

deep blue, bright red and pure yellow gladioli flourishing in her fields. Her little black book of breeding records also held ideas for naming new plants. Playful monikers like Flashlight and Honeymoon joined the more descriptive Blue Heaven, Cardinal, and Canary.

Elizabeth Briggs was not the very first commercial flower grower in San Diego County, but her fame as a hybridizer riveted attention on the area. She also is credited with being a leading industry founder after the availability of water changed everything on the north San Diego coast. When Encinitas held a flower show in 1925, most of the blooms were imported from Portland. That year the City of San Diego gained access to the Hodges Dam. With San Dieguito River water now captured for irrigation, the native chaparral was cleared from coastal areas to create frost-free farm land. By the 1930s, the coastal area between Oceanside and Leucadia supported 50 different flower growing businesses. For the next 70 years, San Diego's floriculture business expanded, growing into a multimillion dollar industry. In 1957, gladiolus was the number one crop in San Diego. Local production represented one-half that of the entire state.

Active until her death at age 97, Elizabeth Briggs saw her son become a prominent businessman and a leader in the commercial flower trade. A grandson, Donald A. Briggs, Jr., continues in the family tradition today, operating the Briggs Tree Company in Vista. Rising land prices due to suburban sprawl and competition from foreign imports eventually sent the flower business into decline, but for the entirety of Elizabeth Briggs' life in San Diego, flowers were a growth industry. She found joy in her work while wholly fulfilling her 1913 pledge: She could grow gladiolus and she did grow gladiolus.

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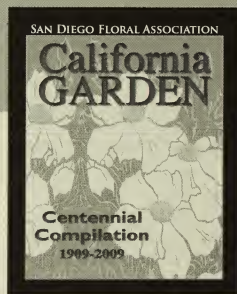


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Reviews

All of the books reviewed in *California Garden* are part of the San Diego Floral Association Library collection (located in Room 105, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego, CA). Come, browse—and if you're a SDFA member—check them out!



California Plant Families: West of the Sierran Crest and Deserts

By Glenn Keator
University of California Press
\$65 (Hardcover), \$27.50 (Paperback);
224 pages

Interest in California's native plants is increasing, yet many feel overwhelmed with the breadth and diversity of the plant world, not knowing what is native or how to identify the native plants.

By focusing on plant families, the author has created a means to learn about 70 prominent plant families indigenous to California. The book does not try to be definitive, but outlines key features of each family for easy identification, and further defines several of the principal native plants in that species, as well as noting similar naturalized plants which may be confused with natives.

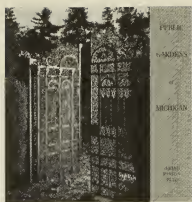
Each family is identified with botanic and common name for the family, followed by key visual features that the reader can recognize at a glance. These may include the type of plant, vegetative features, flower features and fruits. Particularly useful is a description of related or similar-looking families, assuring confident and reliable identification of the California native. And, as background, there are statistics about the plant. As example, under *Malvaceae* (Mallow Family) "there are about 2,000 species widely distributed throughout the world, especially diverse in dry areas and the tropics." California genera and species are enumerated and then described, "The region has 14 native and four nonnative genera."

Each genus has a brief description of both form and habitat, enabling the reader to further define the specimen he or she may be trying to identify. One or more examples of the plants in the family are illustrated in clear black and white line drawings.

The book makes every effort to be user friendly. As a nod to the importance of non-native plants in the California landscape, Keator includes the *Myrtaceae* (Myrtle Family). This family has no representation in our region, but three nonnative genera and 11 species are represented in such familiar plants as the ubiquitous eucalyptus.

California Plant Families is not specifically a field guide, but it is a wonderful reference for those interested in exploring the range and breadth of California native plants. From small native grasses to towering trees, a full range of plants are defined and described, making this a very useful and user friendly book.

—Lucy Warren



Public Gardens of Michigan

By Miriam Easton Rutz
Michigan State University Press
\$35 (Hardcover); 108 pages

Sometimes a guide book can fail a garden lover! I have traveled in and through the state of Michigan many times, but my guide books did not list

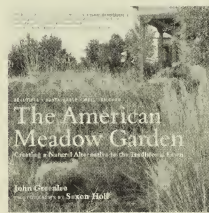
the numerous garden attractions of the state. You can prepare for some delightful garden visits with this signed copy from Miriam Rutz. She presented the book to the Palomar District when she was a speaker there and they presented it to Floral at our 100-year celebration at the Grant.

Remember that Michigan has many residents of Dutch heritage and you will not be surprised to read of the 200-bulb tulip fields surrounding a 200 year old windmill near Holland, Michigan. In addition to the Dutch influence, there are gardens inspired by French, Italian and English styles in many parts of the state. The Alger gardens in Grosse Pointe, Applewood in Flint, Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester, the Fisher mansion in Detroit as well as the gardens of brothers Henry and Edsel Ford near Detroit are described, some with beautiful photos. You also would know to visit Michigan State Agricultural College, where landscape gardening in the U.S. began.

These are but a few of Rutz's recommended garden adventures.

Please note that in the Floral Association library, a recent count shows 75 books on the shelves about famous gardens all over the world. For your future trips, or for armchair enjoyment, prepare by a visit to your very own horticulture-floriculture library in Room 105 of Casa del Prado in Balboa Park.

—Kay Harry



The American Meadow Garden: Creating a Natural Alternative to the Traditional Lawn

By John Greenlee
Timber Press
\$35 (Hardcover); 278 pages

The plantsman and nursery owner who turned gardeners on to the beauty and garden worthiness of ornamental grasses over the past two decades has a new mission. Passionately presented in his new book, "The American Meadow Garden," John Greenlee wants to replace boring green lawns with meadows of graceful grasses, easy-care bulbs and other colorful flowering plants. The reasons are simple: Thirsty turf lawns are a drain on resources and the environment, while meadows are not.

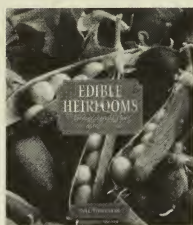
While he finds inspiration for them in nature, the meadow gardens Greenlee proposes are designed to provide the maximum visual interest over the longest periods of time with the least amount of water. In addition, gardeners are not limited to one style, as the book's many photos by Saxton Holt reveal. Meadow gardens can be minimalist, cottage, tropical, desert or anything else, with a little imagination. They also can be any size; for

example check out the 900-square-foot jewel of a meadow garden at the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College designed with help from Greenlee.

Compared to lawns with their incessant need for mowing, feeding and watering, meadows are easy care. Greenlee, who lives in the Bay area but has a nursery in Pomona, says once-a-year maintenance – what he calls “the big chop” – refreshes the plants and is an opportunity to tweak the meadow’s design. Sure beats lawn care. Plus less work means more time to enjoy the play of light and wind, birds and butterflies, on the grasses.

Gardeners intrigued with this idea – it sure has appeal in this time of water restrictions and soaring rates – benefit from Greenlee’s years of experience with these plants and meadow design. The book has extensive lists of grasses and companion plantings and loads of practical how-tos, including ways to eliminate a lawn and plant the meadow.

This is a great companion to Greenlee’s original “Encyclopedia of Ornamental Grasses” and a good addition to the San Diego gardener’s book shelf. Meadows are magical and the idea that you can have one right outside your front or back door is irresistible, especially with Greenlee’s expert helping hand. – *Mary James*



***Edible Heirlooms:
Heritage Vegetables for the
Maritime Climate***

By Bill Thorness
Skipstone

\$18.95 (Paperback); 160 pages

As the popularity of growing and/or eating heirloom varieties of vegetables continues to increase, more books are being published to help home gardeners in this pursuit. And all are welcome, especially those that deal with the specific issues of our regional climates.

This small but elegant book is nicely illustrated with colored drawings of various veggies – all done by the author. Thorness has been growing vegetables in the maritime Northwest for 20-plus years and has written about gardening for the *Seattle Times* and other publications.

This book contains not only descriptions of specific heirloom vegetable varieties and information on how to successfully grow them in the Seattle climate zone, but also lots of tips, tricks and gardening lore from someone who has experienced it first hand.

At first glance, you might not think that a vegetable gardening book for the Pacific Northwest would be of value in our Southern California climate, but the background information on the varieties and user friendly advice on such things as seed storing, harvesting and growing make it a worthwhile read. The historical and anecdotal information that precedes each variety makes this book fascinating.

This reviewer felt that the book would have been greatly enhanced by color photos such as the one that appears on the cover. Otherwise, this is a nice gift for you or someone in the Seattle area and one that can hold its own as a good read when weather keeps us from our gardens. – *Laura Starr*

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Now is the time

Timely tips to
keep your plants
happy throughout
March and April

African Violets

Barbara Conrad, Carlsbad African Violet Society

- Revitalize violets by repotting every six months with fresh soil that has been sterilized in the oven or microwave.
- Leach violets with warm water at the first sign of fertilizer salts around the rim of the pot and/or on the top of the soil.
- Search the Internet to find commercial companies or individual growers who will sell and ship plants to you.
- Fertilize violets with one-half the amount suggested on the label if you use "wick" watering. This is a continuous water system and requires fewer nutrients in the watering well.
- Avoid fertilizers that use urea as an ingredient. Check the label.
- Isolate violets from other houseplants or cut flowers to avoid infestation.

Begonias

Doris Smith, Alfred D. Robinson Begonia Society

- Replenish soil. Mulch where needed.
- Start feeding. Use one-fourth strength of an all-purpose plant food once a week, half strength if twice a month, full strength if once a month.
- Keep plants moist, not too wet.
- Start new plants from cuttings, leaves, or seeds.
- Remove all spent blossoms and leaves.

Bonsai

Kora Dalager, San Diego Bonsai Club

- Repot bonsai. Deciduous trees need repotting more often than conifers. Repot deciduous trees every one to two years and conifers every two to three years.
- Root prune before repotting. Be sure to wire the roots into the pot securely.
- Broad-leaved evergreens such as azaleas should be repotted in March.
- Graft conifers and deciduous trees.
- Adjust watering according to weather conditions. Avoid over-watering during the rainy season.
- Repotted trees should not be fertilized until one month after repotting; otherwise start fertilizing in April.



African Violets

Photo: Rachel Cobb

- Rapeseed cake fertilizers are best for bonsai. Lacking that, use chemical fertilizers diluted to one-fourth strength to avoid root and leaf burn.
- Watch for aphids. Treat with insecticidal soap, protecting the soil. Aphids may be present on deciduous trees as well as on conifers.

Bromeliads

Mary Siemers, Bromeliad Study Group of Balboa Park

- Clean plants after the winter by cutting dead leaves and spent blossoms, and flushing in between the leaves and the center cup. This results in healthier plants.
- Check for scale. If present, treat with Cygon 2 according to the instructions on the label.
- Keep snails and slugs away. Clean up all debris from the plant area; then spread wood ashes around it.
- Start fertilizing. One good way is to spread one teaspoon of Osmocote formula 14-14-14 over potting media. Use 1 teaspoon for a 6-inch pot.
- Protect plants from sunburn. Use shade cloth or any other material that allows plenty of sunlight to come through.
- Proper light and sufficient air circulation is essential for bromeliads.

Cacti and Succulents

Don and Laura Starr, The Grateful Shed and members of San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society

- If rain has been scarce, be sure to keep container plants hydrated, especially those with winter growers like aeoniums,

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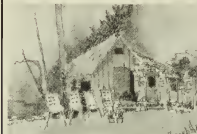
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dudleyas and senecios. If the temperatures are above 50 degrees water all ground and container plants early in the morning to adhere to City water regulations and to give plants a chance to dry out before the colder, damper evenings. Spiny or fuzzy plants such as cacti do not like to be overwatered and cold.

- Rain or not, check container plants to be sure they are not sitting in water and that they are not so low in their pots that the soil stays moist. That can lead to rotting at the base of the plant. The exception would be if container plant soil is so hard that water rolls off. Then put it in a pan of water a few inches deep for no more than half an hour which will allow the roots and bottom soil to soak up moisture.
- Continue to check weather reports for possible freeze or hail warnings and have your covers - plastic sheeting, hay or even old shower curtains - at the ready for overnight protection.
- Continue to groom container and in-ground plants. Remove all dead leaves and debris; cut off desiccated flower stems.
- With warmer weather check for aphids and mites and treat accordingly. Remove by hand or use a good miticide (never in direct sun) following label directions carefully.
- Inspect containers for mineral buildup. Remove these deposits using plastic scrubbers, steel wool, a good plastic scraper or even a diluted solution of vinegar and baking soda. Be careful not to get any on the plant.
- Winter is a good time to thin out large landscape plants such as agaves and aloes after blooming. Store the offsets in a cool dry shady place on newspaper, bark or sand for planting later in the season.
- If you fertilize (especially for bloom) remember the numbers on the fertilizer correspond to the letters NPK.. N is for nitrogen (promotes green growth); P is for phosphorus (promotes flowering) and K is for potassium (promotes root development, general health and helps plants withstand severe temperature changes). A good fertilizer will have an equal balance of all three. Avoid using a fertilizer without the three nutrients.
- Bring some of your flowering plants inside and put in a bright window to enjoy for up to two weeks. Or gift someone with one to enjoy as well.

Camellias

Sharon Lee, San Diego Camellia Society

- Begin a fertilizing program. Feed three times during the year. The first feeding is in March. An easy way to remember the schedule is to feed around St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day and July 4th.
- As new growth comes on towards the end of the month and starts to elongate, it is time to feed. For the first feeding, mix blood meal with cottonseed meal at a ratio of 1 part blood meal to 4 parts cottonseed. It is also recommended to add chelated iron at this time. You also can use a pre-mixed camellia/azalea fertilizer.
- Watch for aphids and hose them off with a spray of water. They are attracted to the soft new growth.
- Prune before new growth starts or while new growth is under an inch long. Cut the branch back to its origin or to an outward

pointing growth bud or dormant bud eye and don't leave more than ¼ inch of a stub at the cut.

- Keep in mind the three universal pruning points: 1) Remove all dead or weak branches; 2) remove all crossing branches that may interfere with other branches; 3) remove branches to open up the center of the plant in order to allow light to enter and air to circulate.
- Keep after those fallen blooms. Pick them up and remove.

Dahlias

Dave Tooley, San Diego Dahlia Society

- Prepare gardens/pots for spring planting.
- Dig and divide dahlias.
- Plant tubers beginning in April when soil is warm. Tubers should be 4 to 6 inches down, planted horizontally with "eyes" up. Insert stakes at this time and hang name tags on top of each one.
- Keep moist but not wet until plant has broken the surface of the soil.
- Protect from harsh sun; water lightly.
- Protect from snails and slugs.

Epiphyllums

Phil Peck, San Diego Epiphyllum Society

- Watch weather for possible late frosts.
- Trim dead and unsightly branches.
- Check for ants, aphids and scale.
- Feeds epiphyllums with a low-nitrogen fertilizer. A low nitrogen fertilizer is the accepted standard, although many find that any fertilizer works fine, as long as there is some applied.
- Check trellis and ties to insure plants are well-secured.
- Give plants more filtered sunlight, but not direct sun, to encourage bud development.
- Bait for snails. Granules are effective when placed at the base of the plant. Nightly "patrols" with a flashlight are effective.
- Make sure all pots are in place a place where they have good drainage.
- Take cuttings now to callous before planting.
- Remove buds from young plants. You will be rewarded with a healthier plant and more blooms in the future.

Ferns

Bob Halley, San Diego Fern Society

- Fertilize with half strength high nitrogen liquid or slow release pellets.
- Remove dead and dying fronds. Clean up plants for spring.
- Water more frequently. Most ferns are starting to grow now. Collect rainwater for plants that don't get it naturally. It will leach out salts.
- Divide and repot over grown plants as they start to grow. Top-dress others.

- Spray for aphids, thrips and scale. Start looking for snails and slugs. Spread bait as needed.
- Watch for giant white flies, best treated by wiping off egg spirals and hosing plants.
- Sow last years spores.

Fruit Trees and Vines

**Vincent Lazaneo, Urban Horticulture Advisor,
UC Cooperative Extension**

- If the soil is not moist, irrigate to a depth of three feet when new growth begins.
- Apply fertilizer high in nitrogen. Most mature fruit trees require the equivalent of one pound of actual nitrogen annually. Divide the amount of fertilizer required into three equal lots and apply them six weeks apart, starting in the spring after new growth begins.
- Begin thinning fruit of apples, pears and stone fruit when they are about ½-inch in size. Space fruit four to six inches apart. Leave one fruit per spur. Thin early-maturing varieties earlier and heavier than late-maturing varieties.
- Check trees for pests. Wash foliage periodically with a forceful spray of water to dislodge aphids, spider mites and whiteflies. If a pesticide is needed, use a chemical that has a short residual activity, such as insecticidal soap, horticultural oil or pyrethrin, to protect beneficial insects.
- Keep ants off trees by wrapping a band of heavy paper or duct tape around the trunk and coating it with a sticky material like Tanglefoot. Trim branches that touch other objects to stop ants from going around the barrier. Also place ant stakes or small containers with toxic bait by ant nests and trails.
- Spray apples after bloom to control codling moth (wormy fruit). Apply carbaryl (Sevin) after petals have fallen and again three weeks later. For other control methods see the UC Pest Note on Codling Moth at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu.
- Control powdery mildew on grapes. Apply sulfur spray (Safer Garden Fungicide) or dust when new shoots are 6, 12, 18 and 24 inches long. Then every two weeks, or as needed until harvest.

Herbs

John Noble, Coastal Sage Gardening

- Weed and prep beds.
- Amend and fertilize soil.
- Plant annual herbs after the last frost. Borage, cilantro and dill will do better if planted by seed. Basil can be grown by seed or transplant.
- Protect new plants from snails and slugs.
- Harvest from native herbs: sagebrush, yerba mansa, white sage, black sage and elderberry, among others.
- Make fresh herbal bouquets with mint, thyme, rosemary and sage. Fresh or dried, the make great gifts for your gourmand friends.



Photo: Rachel Cobb

Iris

Irises

Leon Vogel, San Diego/Imperial Counties Iris Society

- Start feeding with low-nitrogen, all-purpose fish fertilizers.
- Water regularly if there is no rain.
- Clean beds and keep weeds under control.
- Watch for pests. Systemic spray applied as a drench will usually free iris of aphids and thrips.
- Give Japanese and Louisiana irises an application of an acid food; a camellia-type fertilizer is convenient to use.

Native Plants

John Noble, Coastal Sage Gardening

- Monitor the local rainfall total. If it is above average, no water is needed.
- Finish planting natives. March is the end of the planting season for most drought tolerant species. Some riparian area natives, such as yerba mansa, can be planted throughout the year.
- Weed out the non-natives (sowthistle and such).

Orchids

Christopher Croom, San Diego County Orchid Society

- Repot anything needing a new pot. This is a great time to replace any green and white moss in pots and baskets that rotted during the winter.
- Train developing spikes, particularly among oncidium.
- Begin or increase watering for deciduous orchids as temperatures increase and plants show signs of growth.
- Water plants more often and be sure that the increased light and temperatures don't cause sun damage. Fertilizers can be increased this time of year, too.
- Finish all repotting before temperatures get too hot.
- Monitor cooler-growing plants to make sure they are not getting stressed as temperatures rise.
- Pot up keikeis (the babies) from your epidendrum stems to make new plants.

Pelargoniums

Jim Zemcik, San Diego Geranium Society

- Remove dead, older and/or damaged leaves. This will promote new growth and protect against molds and fungi, including geranium rust, on zonals. Removal of older leaves allows more light into the plant interior and will result in fuller plants with more blooms.
- Repot into larger containers where necessary and pot rooted cuttings.
- Maintain a steady watering cycle. Even in rainy conditions the foliage may get wet but the rain may run off the foliage and not get into the pot. Keep your plants watered.
- Continue feeding with a good commercial fertilizer. Use one-third to one-half of the label's recommended strength. Apply at two week intervals.
- Continue a pest control and disease prevention program. Guard against geranium rust, budworm and aphids. There are several combination products that contain both an insecticide and fungicide and will treat with one application. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations and keep preventative control on a steady, continuous schedule.
- Top pinch any long or barren stems to promote fuller growth and increased flowering.
- Protect plants from late season freezes. Use temporary coverings, move plants to an elevated location or place plants in a protected place overnight.
- Spread plants so they have plenty of room to grow. This provides better air circulation and light which helps to prevent pests and disease.
- Continue to rotate plants to keep them well shaped.

Plumerias

Frank Zotter, Southern California Plumeria Society

- Move potted plants from protected winter areas to warm full sun.
- Start watering and fertilizing with a low nitrogen fertilizer like 3-12-12. This is only a guide. Your soil conditions may require some adjustments or other nutrients.
- Take cuttings and prune. Prune only to shape the plant.
- Repot plants and "top up" larger plants. This is to replace the soil with a fresh and revitalized mix. Use one-half cactus mix, one-fourth #3 perlite and one-fourth Wormgold. Keep soil at same level as before.
- Expect first new blooms from last season's remaining inflorescence.

Roses

Roger English, San Diego Rose Society

- Apply at least one inch of water twice per week to keep plants well hydrated.
- Start the growing season fertilizer routine. There are many successful methods of doing this with organic foods or synthetic chemicals.
- Control aphids by washing them off with a strong stream of water from the hose in the early morning. Aphids are clustered on new growth. It is easy to squish them between your fingers. Insecticidal soap and horticultural sprays are effective.
- Control rose slugs (sawfly larvae) using Spinosad which is an

organic product. Rose slugs thrive on the underside of leaves and eat most of the leaf, leaving only lacy-looking skeletal remains. Spinosad is also the best choice for caterpillars.

- Control powdery mildew. Either wash each bud with a water spray every morning or spray with fungicides. Good control is achieved by alternating Compass and Banner Maxx, spraying every two weeks.
- You can also shovel-prune bushes that are susceptible and replace them with mildew-resistant plants.
- Love and preserve beneficial insects by avoiding the use of any general pesticide like Orthene or Merit. Keeping beneficial insects alive will keep spider mites dead. If you use powerful pesticides like the two mentioned, spray only the flower buds or spot spray the new growth where there is an aphid infestation.
- Look for and preserve basal cane growth, which is new growth originating at or slightly above the bud union (where the blooming part of the rose grafted to the root stock). Gently stake these new canes.
- For any information or questions about roses go to <http://www.sdrosesociety.org/index.htm>, the San Diego Rose Society website and click on Ask an Expert. There is extensive information and excellent photos of pests and beneficial insects at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/pmg/menu.homegarden.html, the University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management website.

Vegetables

Vincent Lazaneo, Urban Horticulture Advisor,
UC Cooperative Extension

- Prepare soil for planting by incorporating compost and a complete fertilizer high in phosphorus. Apply chemical fertilizers just before planting. If manures are used, apply them several weeks before planting and irrigate to leach salts from the surface soil. Apply no more than 20 pounds of poultry manure or 50 pounds of steer manure per 100 square feet.
- Plant cool season vegetables: beets, carrots, celeriac, celery (transplants), chard, chives, endive, leeks, lettuce, green onions, parsley, parsnips, bush peas (March), early white potatoes, radish, rutabaga (March) and spinach (March).
- Plant warm season vegetables after danger of frost is past and soil is warm: snap beans, cantaloupes, chayote, corn, cucumber, eggplant, Florence fennel, okra, peppers, sweet potatoes, squash, tomatoes and watermelon.
- Use hot caps or floating row covers to promote faster growth of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and other warm season vegetables.

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Curious about Geranium George?

Project's three new geraniums
herald spring at May Day celebration

By Ann Jarmusch

From tiny geranium seeds a mighty May Day celebration is growing.

Welcome spring - and three new hybrid geraniums to be unveiled - during May Day festivities May 1 at the historic Marston House & Gardens in the northwest corner of Balboa Park.

The unusual Geranium George Project lies at the root of this full day of nature-oriented activities, art and music for all ages, including afternoon tea and an evening cocktail party. The Arts and Crafts-style Marston House and its two gardens - one formal, one rustic - will also be open for guided tours. Proceeds from the event and its exclusive geranium sales will go toward restoring the gardens on this five-acre estate, a National Historic Landmark operated by nonprofit Save Our Heritage Organisation for the city of San Diego.

Led by noted geranium breeder Jim Zemcik of Point Loma and his wife, Linda, the all-volunteer Geranium George Project develops colorful, new geraniums that are available only through SOHO's Marston House Museum Shop, in the historic carriage house at 3525 Seventh Avenue.

The project's name honors George Marston, the visionary civic leader and philanthropist who built the three-story house in 1905 for his family and supervised the development of its gardens over the next four decades.

"These geraniums make wonderful landscape plants," said Jim Zemcik. Unlike most commercially available geraniums, the collection has been bred to bloom year round, withstand hot and cold temperatures and resist geranium rust and pests.

The three special hybrids debuting May 1 were inspired by Suzy's Zoo, a menagerie of fanciful bird and animal characters who live in the imaginary Duckport, all created by San Diego native Suzy Spafford. Suzy's Zoo, best known through greeting cards, calendars and books that Spafford writes and illustrates, is popular around the world.

Spafford will be at the Marston House May 1 to help launch the hybrid geraniums. Plant names and details are being kept secret until then.

"The Marston House is a very important piece of San Diego history and architecture," said Spafford, who lives and works in a 1917 Craftsman bungalow in Mission Hills. "It's important to preserve historic places because they are a record of our artistic endeavors and who we are. It's not just a link to the past; it goes beyond that."

What came to be the Geranium George Project began as a decorating scheme for the Marston House's centennial in 2005. Linda Mosel went to a San Diego Geranium Society meeting for help and happened to meet the Zemciks. They offered to lend the

Marston House 100 blooming plants for a day.

"Then they brought out a plant to show me," Mosel recalled. "Jim said, 'This is a geranium I've hybridized that is not named.'"

That plant became Geranium George and the Geranium George Project was born. The color and looks of this zonal plant "really go well with the (red-brick) architecture of the Marston House," said Jim Zemcik. Each ruffled green leaf has a maroon center. The flowers are a dark coral-color that changes with the light.

The group also named a hybrid for Kate Sessions, San Diego's famed nurserywoman and a friend of the Marstons. It's in the Martha Washington family and has a dark pink-and-white striped flower.

"The public response to the plants has been overwhelming," Jim Zemcik said, referring to the hundreds of geraniums sold at the Marston House and community events. "We have never been able to keep up with the demand," so the volunteers, who include Mosel, Jeanette Dutton, Pat Kelly and Madelon Seamans, are stocking up for May 1.

Alana Coons, SOHO's events and education director and a geranium lover, is not surprised that sales have exceeded expectations.

"The use of the plant in California dates back to the gardens of the missions," Coons said. "Once the geranium was introduced from South Africa to England in the early 17th century, its popularity spread rapidly throughout Europe. By 1760, seeds were sent to America to the famed botanist John Bertram of Philadelphia. Thomas Jefferson brought geraniums plants home from France."

The Geranium George Project benefits from assistance from Grand View Geranium Gardens, a leading grower in Carson, and the city of San Diego's Park and Recreation Department, where Balboa Park horticulturist Crystal Ritchie has been instrumental. "In addition to raising money for the Marston House & Gardens, our purpose is to get the word out about the house museum and educate the public about George Marston and what he did for the city," said Linda Zemcik. "Without his vision and follow-through, San Diego would not be the special place that it is."

For tickets and more information on May Day at the Marston House & Gardens and the Geranium George Project, call (619) 297-9327 or visit www.sohosandiego.org.

Ann Jarmusch writes about architecture, historic preservation and art for local and national publications.

The Hybridizer's Motto: Try, Try Again

By Jim Zemcik

Hybridizing is the oldest of humankind's methods of genetic engineering. Developing new hybrids of plants and animals involves defining specific desirable characteristic and then manipulating the genetics to achieve that result.

Most often we envision genetic manipulation through sexual manipulation, i.e. the use of sperm and eggs, but genetic manipulation also is achievable via chemical means and gene splicing. Those two methods have the advantage of much more immediate and predictable results and are the wave of the hybridizing future.

The goals of nature are simple - survival and procreation. Aesthetics, pest resistance, over abundance, etc., are not goals of nature; they are goals of humans. Therefore the hybridizer is by definition seeking to develop "non-natural" results using nature's basket of raw materials.

Many of the hybrids we rely on for food would not continue to exist without the constant intervention of humans in their maintenance and improvement. Without such intervention, we would not have corn; it doesn't exist in nature. However, it has become such an important food and economic crop that we continue to manipulate it for our own survival.

Patience and Surprises

I work with geraniums. I am a sexual genetic manipulator, rather than a chemical or technological manipulator. Basically what I do is simple - define a goal and cross breed plants exhibiting a tendency towards achieving that goal

until I achieve the goal. But this is a very time consuming process and requires great patience.

A few years ago I decided to work towards geraniums that were less subject to geranium rust than those on the market. Before I could begin, I needed to identify existing plants that were less susceptible to rust than others. From that point on it became a matter of trial and error.

Sounds simple: Take two plants that appear to have less of a tendency to rust and cross them, hoping to get a new plant with even more rust resistance. Those of you with children know it is not that easy. Two parents with brown hair and brown eyes can produce a pretty interesting variety of offspring. Some may be blond or have blue eyes; some may be short and others tall, etc.

There is a time element here. With the children, it may take 20 years or so to see what desired characteristics actually resulted. Thankfully with plants, the birth to maturity cycle is somewhat shorter, though the "roll of the dice" factor is still the same. Hybrid-x-Hybrid crosses can have surprising results.

It normally takes several years to measure what success, if any, has been achieved from the initial crosses. One must plant



Jim Zemcik practices the hybridizer's craft.

the seeds, let them grow, place the plants in the environment and see how they perform over time. Then one selects any new plants that seem to exhibit progress towards the goal and use them to start the process again, hoping to make progress with the next set of crosses.

I work on a very small scale, but it is not uncommon for my work to result in a few thousand seeds each year. Those seeds become a few thousand plants...which take up a lot of room. Easily 99 percent of the resulting seedlings end up in the trash pile. This is a numbers game.

Science and Art

Sexual hybridizing involves taking pollen from one plant and impregnating the female portion of a different plant. This is a simple place for the novice to start. In commercial production other techniques such as emasculating and use of positive pressure greenhouses are incorporated into this procedure. It is a science as well as an art.

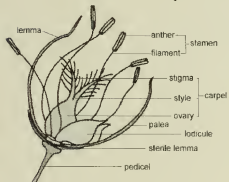
If you are interested in trying your hand at this, a couple of different plants are all you need. The pollen is on the end of stems called stamen. The ovary is at the bottom of a receptacle called the pistil. The top of the pistil is called the stigma.

Use a pair of tweezers to remove a stamen from one plant and transfer the pollen into the stigma of another. Nature will take its course and seed will develop. With geraniums that usually means 5 seeds or less per seed pod. Wait for the seed to set and mature. Harvest them, plant them and see what results.

Try this a few times and you will begin to understand how this all works. It can be lots of fun. And you never know, with a little luck you may find something that is unique. No matter what your experience level, sexual and chemical hybridization results boil down to luck. The genes match up or they don't.

One word of caution: Learn to throw things away. Learning that may be the toughest part of the process. You can't keep everything. Develop a goal and dispose of anything that doesn't get you closer to that goal. This allows you to focus your efforts and focus is the key to success.

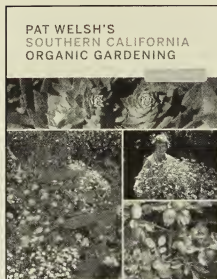
Jim Zemcik is a leader of the Geranium George Project.



Organic Gardening

The Rise of Organic Gardening and Why These Practices Are Vital Today

By Pat Welsh



(Excerpted from the Introduction of *Pat Welsh's Southern California Organic Gardening, Month by Month*; Published by Chronicle Books; Copyright 2009. Look for the book in area bookstores or at online retailers.)

The word *organic* can be confusing. In the context of science, *organic* means any chemical compound containing carbon, but in the context of farming and gardening, *organic* means the process of growing plants without any poisonous pest controls and fertilizing them exclusively with animal or vegetable fertilizers, such as manure, bone meal, blood meal, or compost, together with naturally mined forms of minerals, as opposed to water-soluble salts. In this book I use the word *organic* as it applies to methods of farming and gardening.

Ancient Methods of Fertilizing

Prior to the development of commercial fertilizers, the feeding of plants was based on what people observed in nature. Rain fell, causing seeds to sprout; trees and other plants grew to maturity, fruited, and eventually died; leaves and dead plants and animals fell to the ground and rotted, creating humus in soil that in turn fed new plants.

Through the centuries, farmers and gardeners learned from nature's example how to promote plant health by composting vegetable and animal wastes and by spreading manure, bones, and ash onto fields. Prior to the development of modern fertilizers, manure provided nitrogen and contributed to the humus content of soil. Bones provided phosphorus, and wood ash provided potassium for soils that didn't contain adequate amounts. (Unfortunately, wood ash is too alkaline for most western soils, but it can be used in small quantities on sandy soils.)

Natural Sources of Nitrogen

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in addition to animal manures, human urine was used as a source of nitrogen, and it is still commonly used today for feeding homegrown vegetables in Finland. Historically, it was used especially on roses, which were observed to benefit from generous applications as long as there was plenty of rainfall to dilute the urea contained in urine and to wash away its salts. On large estates, gardens were provided with a ready supply of nitrogen simply by dumping a pile of peat moss behind gardeners' sheds for the men to use as a latrine and then periodically spreading the moss around the gardens.

(A noble lady in Galsworthy's *The Forsythe Saga* attributes the fine quality of her roses to the fact that she instructed her maids to empty the chamber pots over their roots.)

Additionally, all plant wastes that couldn't be tilled straight into the soil were thrown onto a big rubbish heap in a hidden spot and allowed to rot. After a few years a farmer or gardener could dig into the bottom of his heap and mine barrowful of sweet-smelling black earth—the finest compost, made without fuss and perfect for spreading on the garden or forcing through a screen to fill pots and seed flats.

The Origin of Synthetic Fertilizers

For countless centuries farmers and gardeners had used largely unchanged methods of fertilizing. Then in the nineteenth century a series of scientific experiments proved, first, that plants need certain nutrients, mainly nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium and second, that plant roots cannot tell the difference between *synthetic fertilizers* (man-made mixtures of nutrients) and those that occur naturally in the ground.

Industrialists reading in their morning newspapers that plant roots will absorb what they need regardless of origin instantly saw the commercial possibilities and rushed to build factories for the manufacture of synthetic fertilizers. By the end of the nineteenth century, fertilizer companies had sprung up in Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany, and commercial fertilizers were being imported from Europe to America.

The introduction of commercial lawn fertilizers to America coincided with the late-nineteenth-century enthusiasm for planting lawns as a way to clean up muddy New England towns. When people began to feed grass with synthetic fertilizers, cutting grass with mowing machines instead of cows and sheep, and passing laws requiring pigs to be fenced, the American front lawn came into being.

Eventually it was discovered that plants also need secondary nutrients—calcium, magnesium, and sulfur—as well as what we now call *trace nutrients*, or *trace elements*—manganese, iron, copper, boron, molybdenum, and chlorine. Advances in the manufacture of explosives during the First World War also affected fertilizers. After the war, companies used the new technology to produce plant nutrients in large quantities through chemical means. Thus the modern fertilizer industry was born, which revolutionized agriculture and to a lesser extent gardening.

continued

Special Fertilizers for Specific Needs

Manufacturers soon realized that various plants need nutrients at differing rates, and that diseases can arise if a plant has a deficiency of a certain nutrient necessary to its health, and so they began to create specialized fertilizers. For example, they designed specific fertilizers to fill the special needs of a tomato plant for magnesium and sulfur, while protecting it from blossom-end rot, which may occur if its roots fail to absorb adequate calcium.

By the middle of the twentieth century, scientists had helped manufacturers develop formulas to provide exotic plants with all the elements for healthy growth that nature would have supplied in the wild. They made acid foods, for example, for acid-loving plants, and a wide range of synthetic fertilizers to fill the specific needs of a host of other plants, including citrus, lawns, annual and perennial flowers, vegetables, roses, palms, houseplants, and African violets, to name only a few. Today these fertilizers can be purchased in many forms: granulated, powdered, liquid, and polymer-coated time-release pellets.

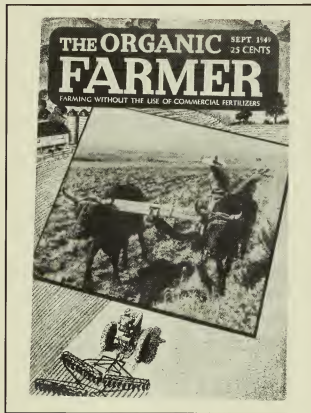
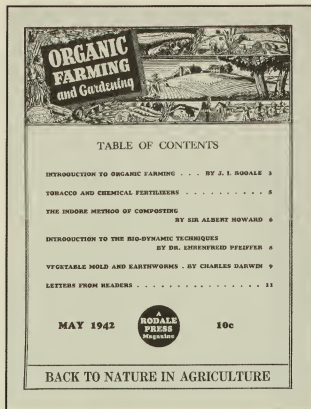
The Modern Revolution in Agriculture and Gardening

The use of synthetic fertilizers simplified agriculture and often resulted in spurts of growth and larger harvests. Today many of the ingredients in fertilizers and pesticides are by-products of the petroleum industry. Companies combine these ingredients, including various forms of nitrogen, in carefully calculated proportions, mixing them with inert ingredients and other nutrients such as minerals mined from the earth.

The Birth of the Organic Movement

As synthetic commercial fertilizers were coming into common use and spreading around the world, several voices arose in opposition. One was that of Sir Albert Howard (1873–1947), often considered the father of organic farming and gardening even though others preceded him. Howard's last and best-known book, *An Agricultural Testament*, promoted the idea of creating fertile, healthy soils by returning all agricultural waste to the ground, as he had observed being done in India.

In 1942, J. I. Rodale, an American businessman influenced by Howard's ideas, began publishing *Organic Farming and Gardening* magazine. Rodale and his followers promoted the idea that unlike chemical fertilizers, organic materials do more than provide nutrients. They also improve soil



J. I. Rodale's *Organic Farming and Gardening* magazine spurred organic gardening in America.

structure and its ability to hold water and nutrients.

How Organic Soils Feed Plants

As microorganisms in soil break down organic materials into humus, observed the proponents of organic gardening, they create a steady flow of nutrients that are long-lasting in the ground and don't wash into groundwater. Synthetic fertilizers, on the other hand, upset the natural organic chemistry of soil, kill earthworms and other beneficial organisms, and prevent the very microbial process that creates nitrogen in healthy soil.

Among the people who eagerly supported these ideas were many farmers and gardeners who had never really changed from the older ways, including my parents, who considered compost and manure heaps an integral part of gardening. They immigrated to America and later brought us children. They bought a farm in Pennsylvania, and during the Second World War created a huge Victory Garden in which we all worked. They ran farm and garden according to organic methods and fed everything with chicken manure. Like many others of my era, I grew up following the ideas of Sir Albert Howard and J. I. Rodale.

Environmental Threats

Though never completely abandoning the ideals of organic gardening, especially in regard to pesticides, I (along with many other gardeners of the past sixty years) have often used chemical fertilizers for reasons of convenience. But now we once again live in an era of dramatic change. The double-edged sword of global warming and environmental pollution threatens our health and indeed our very lives on this planet. We have learned that pesticides and chemicals found in chemically derived fertilizers leach into groundwater and eventually into the ocean. None of us wants to contribute to this problem.

Further, studies have shown that vegetables and fruits grown organically, without artificial fertilizers, are healthier and contain more nutrients than those that are grown with commercial fertilizers. For this reason and to protect their families from cancer and other ills, home vegetable gardeners now



Pat Welsh works in her all-organic vegetable garden.

want to raise vegetables without the use of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, and they no longer wish to use fertilizers that are by-products of the petroleum industry.

Today's gardeners realize that even the small choices we make in our home gardens might collectively help to reduce our society's dependence on foreign oil, as well as protect our own and our children's health. Seen in this light, the simple act of choosing to use an organic rather than a synthetic fertilizer has far-reaching consequences. Meanwhile, fertilizer companies are creating many new organic products that simplify our tasks.

The OMRI Label

As an ever-increasing number of gardeners adopt the organic method, organizations have sprung into being to make their work easier. The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), for example, is a national nonprofit organization that decides which products fully comply with the standards necessary for them to be considered truly organic. Products that adhere to the standards set up by this organization can be awarded the OMRI label of approval, which indicates that they comply with the principles of organic farming and gardening. In most cases, you can use such products safely in an organic garden. (The monthly chapters in this book alert you to doubtful cases.) Farmers raising food products can use fertilizers and pesticides bearing the OMRI label while

maintaining their right to advertise, label, and sell their products as fully organic.

Adopting the Organic Way

Whether to make the switch to organic fertilizers is between you and your conscience. There is no "organic sheriff" going door to door to check up on you, so you're free to tailor your choices to your abilities as a gardener. For example, until you develop your own system and find organic fertilizers suitable for your plants, garden, and budget, you might want to simply use one fertilizer for everything in the garden.

One all-purpose, largely organic fertilizer is Gro-Power, a transitional product that can help people move away from synthetics. Gro-Power gradually builds organic soil, but it does contain a small amount of synthetic nitrogen and thus is not fully organic.

Biosol Mix 7-2-3 is an all-organic fertilizer that you can use for feeding lawns, trees, and vegetables while adding to soil life. For people who dwell in suburbs, simply replacing a commercial synthetic fertilizer with an organic one while controlling pests and plant diseases, as described in this book, without the use of dangerous pesticides can be two big steps toward a more environmentally friendly garden.



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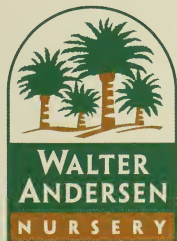
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SDFA Calendar

A listing of the best gardening-related activities in the county for March and April 2010

March Events

MARCH 1

PALOMAR DISTRICT'S FLORAL DESIGN FORUM

Palomar District NGC Designers will answer questions and create designs from the NGC Flower Show Handbook.
When: 12:30 p.m.
Where: Carlsbad Woman's Club, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad

MARCH 2

SAN DIEGO COUNTY ORCHID SOCIETY MEETING

When: 6:30 p.m. Novice Meeting, Room 104; 7:30 p.m. General Meeting, Room 101
Where: Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sdorchids.com

MARCH 3

CHIRP FOR GARDEN WILDLIFE, INC. MEETING

Bob Graham from Alpine Waterfeatures will present a variety of garden water designs.
When: 6:30 p.m.
Where: locations vary
More information: 619-445-8352; www.chirp.org

PALOMAR ORCHID SOCIETY MEETING

Norito Hasegawa will discuss orchid judging.
When: 6:30 p.m. Culture Class; 7:00 p.m. General Meeting
Where: Carlsbad Woman's Club, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad
More information: www.palomarorchid.org

SOUTHWESTERN JUDGES COUNCIL MEETING

When: 10:30 a.m.
Where: Community Room, North County Fair, Escondido
More information: 760-727-7614

THE SAN DIEGO HERB CLUB MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.thesandiegoherbclub.com

MARCH 5

CARLSBAD GARDEN CLUB MEETING

A club field trip to the Daylily Hill Nursery in Escondido with a buffet luncheon at Pala Resort and Casino.
When: 9:30 a.m.
More information: www.carlsbadgardenclub.com

VISTA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Anne Linehan from Setting It In Stone will demonstrate the art of making garden accessories.
When: 12:00 p.m.
Where: Vista Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace Dr., Vista
More information: www.vistagardenclub.org

MARCH 6

SOUTHWEST HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas
More information: 858-566-0503; ahsregion7.org/gardens/_club_pages/southwest_hemerocallis_society.htm

MARCH 7

EAST COUNTY ROSE SOCIETY MEETING

When: 2:00 p.m.
Where: Gardens of members
More information: www.eastcountyrosesociety.com

MARCH 8

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEETING

San Diego author Pat Welsh will present "Growing Summer Vegetables the Organic Way".
When: 6:30 p.m.
Where: Surfside Race Place, Del Mar Fairgrounds, Del Mar
More information: www.sdhortsoc.org

MARCH 9

BROMELIAD STUDY GROUP OF BALBOA PARK MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 619-479-5500; www3.adnc.com/~lynn/brominfo.html

DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 12:00 Noon
Where: St. Stephen Catholic Church, 31020 Cole Grade Road, Valley Center
More information: www.dosvallesgardenclub.org

OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA LA JOLLA CHAPTER MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: La Jolla Library, 7555 Draper Ave., La Jolla
More information: 858-672-7850

SAN DIEGO GERANIUM SOCIETY MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 858-560-0511; www.sdggeranium.org

TEMECULA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING

"Flower Power Floral Design," a timed exhibition; six TVGC members will create designs with "surprise" flowers and supplies.
When: 9:30 a.m.
Where: Temecula Community Recreation Center, 30875 Rancho Vista Rd., Temecula
More information: www.temeculavalleygardenclub.org

MARCH 10

BONITA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m. Hospitality; 10:00 a.m. Meeting
Where: Bonita Library Community Room, 4375 Bonita Road, Bonita
More information: Leslie Schroeder, 619-216-8863; lschle@att.net

OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA SAN DIEGO CHAPTER MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.oharaschoolsandiego.org

POINT LOMA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Cindy Sparks will share her organic approach to pest control.
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego
More information: www.plgc.org

POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Noted floral designer George Speer will demonstrate designs using plant materials found in most gardens.
When: 9:00 a.m.
Where: Lake Poway Pavilion, 14611 Lake Poway Rd., Poway
More information: www.powayvalleygardenclub.org

RAMONA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Horticulturalist Kathleen Eagle will share her knowledge of vegetable garden history.
When: 12:00 Noon
Where: Ramona Women's Club, 524 Main Street, Ramona
More information: www.ramona-garden-club.com

SAN DIEGO EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY MEETING

When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.epiphyllum.com

MARCH 11

IKENOBÔ CHAPTER OF SAN DIEGO MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 858-278-5689

MARCH 13

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER PLANT SALE

Connie Beck will discuss native flora and fauna at 10:00 a.m.
When: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Where: Tree of Life Nursery, 33201 Ortega Hwy, San Juan Capistrano
More information: www.californianativeplants.com, www.cnpsd.org

SAN DIEGO BROMELIAD SOCIETY MEETING

Guillermo Rivera will discuss "Bromeliaceae from Argentina: a habitat approach."
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html

SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEETING

When: 1:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: sdcss.net

MARCH 14

SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB, INC. MEETING

Join us to hear guest speaker Harry Hirao.
When: 10:30 a.m.; classes begin at 9:00 a.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PLUMERIA SOCIETY MEETING

When: 1:00 p.m.
Where: War Memorial Building, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.socalplumeriasociety.com

MARCH 15

SAN DIEGO ROSE SOCIETY MEETING

Weeks Roses' Tom Carruth will address our monthly meeting.
When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sdrosesociety.org

MARCH 16

LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 1:30 p.m.
Where: La Jolla Lutheran Church, 7117 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla
More information: Jody Peterson, 858-729-0711

MARCH 16 *continued*

RANCHO SAN DIEGO GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.

Where: 1077 Vista Madera, El Cajon

More information: Connie Beck, 619-749-4059

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m.

Where: Room 101 or 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: 760-434-5033, www.cnpsd.org

MARCH 17

SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m. Social; 7:30 p.m. Business meeting and speaker

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: 760-942-1919

MARCH 18

BERNARDO GARDENERS MEETING

"Bernardo's Best" features an arts and crafts presentation by members.

When: 1:00 p.m.

Where: R. B. Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Dr., Rancho Bernardo

More information: www.bernardogardeners.org

MARCH 19

CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 11:45 a.m.

Where: Norman Park Senior Center, 270 F St., Chula Vista

More information: Marilyn Saleny, 619-421-6072

SAN DIEGO FERN SOCIETY MEETING

When: 7:30 p.m.

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: www.sdferrn.com

MARCH 20

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER 119 MEETING

■ TWO DAYS

42nd Annual Flower Show

Japanese Ikebana floral arrangements and cultural exhibits.

When: 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: Keiko Schneider, 858-759-2640

MIRACOSTA HORTICULTURE CLUB OF OCEANSIDE MEETING

Master Gardener Karen Cooper Greenwald will present "How to grow vegetables and heirloom tomatoes."

When: 12:45 p.m.

Where: MiraCosta College, Aztlán Room, 2nd floor, Student Union Bldg. (3400)

More information: www.gardencentral.org/california/gcl/miracosta

MARCH 22

CARLSBAD AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY MEETING

When: 10:30 a.m.

Where: Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus Ave., Vista

More information: 760-295-0484

MARCH 23

SAN DIEGO COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY

When: 7:30 p.m.

Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: 858-672-2593

MARCH 24

CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS,

S. D. CHAPTER MEETING

Program is cherimoya and atemoya propagation by grafting; tasting

When: 7:00 p.m.

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: www.crfgsandiego.org

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER 119 MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

More information: Keiko Schneider, 858-759-2640

SAN DIEGUITO GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m. Social; 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon Meeting

Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas

More information: Rita Koczela, president, 760-436-3036; www.sdgic.klnuicro.com

MISSION HILLS GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 6:00 p.m.

Where: United Church of Christ, 4070 Jackdaw St., San Diego

More information: www.missionhillsgardenclub.org

MARCH 25

CROWN GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Traditional and creative floral design with Carvill Veech.

When: 9:00 a.m. Social; 9:30 a.m. Meeting

Where: The Winn Room, Coronado Library, 6400 Orange Ave., Coronado

More information: www.crowngardenclub.org

VILLAGE GARDEN CLUB OF LA JOLLA MEETING

This members only meeting will feature floral designer

Rene van Rems.

When: 10:00 a.m.

Where: Torrey Pines Christian Church, 8320 La Jolla Scenic Dr. North, La Jolla

More information: 858-454-4117; www.villagegardencluboflajolla.com

MARCH 26

SAN DIEGO COUNTY ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE

■ THREE DAYS

"A Rainbow of Orchids."

When: Friday 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.;

Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Where: Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino del Rio South, San Diego

Admission: \$ 7 daily, \$ 10 weekend pass, children under 12 free

More information: www.sdorchids.com

MARCH 27

PALOMAR CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEETING

When: 12:00 Noon

Where: Joslyn Senior Center, 724 N. Broadway, Escondido

More information: 760-741-7553

MARCH 30

FALLBROOK GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Bert Kersey will discuss how to attract birds into the garden.

When: 1:00 p.m.

Where: Fallbrook Community Center, 341 Heald Lane, Fallbrook

More information: www.fallbrookgardenclub.org

SAN CARLOS GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m.

Where: St. Dunstan's, 6556 Park Ridge Blvd., San Carlos

More information: 619-448-3613

April Events

APRIL 2

CARLSBAD GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Jim Zemick from the Geranium Society of San Diego will present "Geraniums; Our Club Flower."

When: 1:00 p.m.

Where: Carlsbad City Library, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad

More information: www.carlsbadgardenclub.com

VISTA GARDEN CLUB MEETING

"The Flower Show Explained – Yes Again" covering all aspects of flower show presentations.

When: 12:00 p.m.

Where: Vista Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace Dr., Vista

More information: www.vistagardenclub.org

APRIL 3

■ TWO DAYS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PLUMERIA SOCIETY ANNUAL CUTTING SALE

Plumeria cuttings, planting demonstrations and books will be available for purchase at this free event. Cash or checks only.

When: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. both days

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: www.socalplumeriasociety.com

SOUTHWEST HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY MEETING

When: 10:00 a.m.

Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas

More information: 858-566-0503; ahsregion7.org/daylily_club_pages/southwest_hemerocallis_society.htm

APRIL 4

EAST COUNTY ROSE SOCIETY MEETING

When: 2:00 p.m.

Where: Gardens of members

More information: www.eastcountyrosesociety.com

APRIL 5

PALOMAR DISTRICT'S FLORAL DESIGN FORUM MEETING

Joy Parker from Joy4Designs will demonstrate how to enhance your designs with man-made materials.

When: 12:30 p.m.-3:00 P.M.

Where: Carlsbad Woman's Club, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad

APRIL 6

SAN DIEGO COUNTY ORCHID SOCIETY MEETING

When: 6:30 p.m. Novice Meeting, Room 104; 7:30 p.m.

General Meeting, Room 101

Where: Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: www.sdorchids.com

APRIL 7

CHIRP FOR GARDEN WILDLIFE MEETING

Vanessa Ruszczyk will present slides and instructions for growing vegetables in raised planters.

When: 6:30 p.m.

Where: locations vary

More information: 619-445-8352; www.chirp.org

PALOMAR ORCHID SOCIETY MEETING

When: 6:30 p.m. Culture Class; 7:00 p.m. General Meeting

Where: Carlsbad Woman's Club, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad

More information: www.palomarorchid.org

THE SAN DIEGO HERB CLUB MEETING

When: 7:00 p.m.

Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego

More information: www.thesandiegoherbclub.com

APRIL 8
IKENOBO CHAPTER OF SAN DIEGO MEETING
When: 9:30 a.m.
Where: Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 858-278-5689

APRIL 10
SAN DIEGO BROMELIAD SOCIETY MEETING
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park
More information: www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html

SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCULENT SOCIETY MEETING
When: 1:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: sdcss.net

APRIL 11
SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB, INC. MEETING
Bob Hilvers will share his expertise at our monthly meeting.
When: 10:30 a.m.; Classes begin at 9:00 a.m.
Where: Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com

APRIL 12
SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEETING
Joe Walker from Obra Verde Growers will discuss Australian perennials for landscape and floral arrangements.
When: 6:30 p.m.
Where: Surfside Race Place, Del Mar Fairgrounds, Del Mar
More information: www.sdhortsoc.org

APRIL 13
BROMELIAD STUDY GROUP OF BALBOA PARK MEETING
When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 619-479-5500, www3.adnc.com/~lynnl/brominfo.html

DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB MEETING
When: 12:00 Noon
Where: St. Stephen Catholic Church, 31020 Cole Grade Road, Valley Center
More information: www.dosvallesgardenclub.org

OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA LA JOLLA CHAPTER MEETING
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: La Jolla Library, 7555 Draper Ave., La Jolla
More information: 858-672-7850

SAN DIEGO GERANIUM SOCIETY MEETING
When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 858-560-0510, www.sdgeranium.org

TEMECULA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING
Pat Welsh will discuss and sign her new book on organic gardening.
When: 9:30 a.m.
Where: Temecula Community Recreation Center, 30875 Rancho Vista Rd., Temecula
More information: www.temeculavalleygardenclub.org

APRIL 14
BONITA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING
When: 9:30 a.m. Hospitality; 10:00 a.m. Meeting
Where: Bonita Library Community Room, 4375 Bonita Road, Bonita
More information: Leslie Schroeder, 619-216-8863;
schle@att.net

OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA SAN DIEGO CHAPTER MEETING
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.oharaschoolsandiego.org

POINT LOMA GARDEN CLUB MEETING
PLGC will have its annual bus tour.
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego
More information: www.plgc.org

POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB MEETING
Kevin Hitchcock from the Poway Water District will discuss water conservation.
When: 9:00 a.m.
Where: Templar's Hall, Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., Poway
More information: www.powayvalleygardenclub.org

RAMONA GARDEN CLUB MEETING
Kevin Hauser will present "How to Grow Apples in Warm Climates."
When: 12:00 Noon
Where: Ramona Women's Club, 524 Main Street, Ramona
More information: www.ramonagardenclub.com

SAN DIEGO EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY MEETING
When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.epiphyllum.com

APRIL 15
BERNARDO GARDENERS SPRING GARDEN TOUR
A self-guided tour of member and community gardens.
When: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Where: Ticket sales locations to be announced.
More information: www.bernardogardeners.org

CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB MEETING
When: 11:45 a.m.
Where: Norman Park Senior Center, 270 F St., Chula Vista
More information: Marilyn Saleny, 619-421-6072

SAN DIEGO FERN SOCIETY MEETING
When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sdfern.com

APRIL 17
CORONADO FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE
■ TWO DAYS
When: 8:00 a.m. to noon. Saturday, Plant Sale; 1:00 p.m. Saturday, Flower Show; 10:00 a.m. Sunday Flower Show; self-guided garden tour both days
Where: Spreckels Park, Coronado
More information: www.coronadoflowershow.com

MIRACOSTA HORTICULTURE CLUB OF OCEANSIDE ANNUAL PLANT SALE
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Oceanside Walmart at Highway 78 and Jefferson
More information: www.gardencentral.org/california/gcl/miracosta

POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE
When: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Where: Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., Poway
More information: www.powayvalleygardenclub.org

APRIL 18
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER GARDEN SOCIETY MEETING
Call for meeting information
More information: 760-436-3704; www.scwgarden.org

APRIL 20
SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION MEETING
Dr. Anne Fege discusses "Children and Nature: Inspiring Life-long Passion for Plants and the Planet."
When: 6:00 p.m. Dinner (\$15); 7:00 Program
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 619-272-5762 for reservations

SAN DIEGO ROSE SOCIETY MEETING
Diane and Walt Kilmer present "Roses of New Zealand."
When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sdrosesociety.org

LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB MEETING
When: 1:30 p.m.
Where: La Jolla Lutheran Church, 7117 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla
More information: Jody Peterson, 858-729-0711

RANCHO SAN DIEGO GARDEN CLUB MEETING
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: 1077 Vista Madera, El Cajon
More information: Connie Beck, 619-749-4059

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER MEETING
When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101 or 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 760-434-5033, www.cnpsd.org

APRIL 21
SAN DIEGO CAMELLIA SOCIETY MEETING
When: 7:00 p.m. Social; 7:30 p.m. Business meeting and speaker
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 760-942-1919

APRIL 22
CROWN GARDEN CLUB MEETING
Join us as we explore the flora and fauna of the Tijuana Estuary.
When: 9:00 a.m. Social; 9:30 a.m. Meeting
Where: The Winn Room, Coronado Library, 6400 Orange Ave., Coronado
More information: www.crowngardenclub.org

VILLAGE GARDEN CLUB OF LA JOLLA ART AND FLORAL DESIGN SHOW
Everyone is welcome to attend "Expressions in Art and Flowers".
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Torrey Pines Christian Church, 8320 La Jolla Scenic Dr., North, La Jolla
More information: 858-454-4117;
www.villagegardencluboflajolla.com

APRIL 24
DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE
■ TWO DAYS
When: Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Sunday 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Where: St. Stephens Church Hall, 31020 Cole Grade Road, Valley Center
Admission: Free and open to the public

PALOMAR CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEETING

When: 12:00 Noon
Where: Joslyn Senior Center, 724 N. Broadway, Escondido
More information: 760-741-7553

RANCHO SANTA FE GARDEN CLUB GARDEN TOUR AND LUNCHEON

A tour of four beautiful Rancho Santa Fe gardens.
When: Buses depart at 9:00 a.m.
Where: 17025 Avenida de Acacias, Rancho Santa Fe
Cost: \$50 members; \$65 non-members
More information: 858-756-1554

SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB, INC. SPRING BONSAI SHOW

■ TWO DAYS

Admission is free!
When: 10:30 a.m. both days
Where: Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sandiegobonsaclub.com

APRIL 26

CARLSBAD AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY MEETING

When: 10:30 a.m.
Where: Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus Ave., Vista
More information: 760-295-0484

APRIL 27

FALLBROOK GARDEN CLUB MEETING

Cathy Wall will discuss roses.
When: 1:00 p.m.
Where: Fallbrook Community Center, 341 Heald Lane, Fallbrook
More information: www.fallbrookgardenclub.org

SAN CARLOS GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m.
Where: St. Dunstan's, 6556 Park Ridge Blvd., San Carlos
More information: 619-448-3613

SAN DIEGO COUNTY DAHLIA SOCIETY MEETING

When: 7:30 p.m.
Where: Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: 858-672-2593

APRIL 28

CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS, S. D. CHAPTER MEETING

New citrus varieties and culture; propagation by budding.
When: 7:00 p.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.crfgsandiego.org

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER 119 MEETING

Japanese flower arrangements will be demonstrated by Wafu Kai School.
When: 10:00 a.m.
Where: Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: Keiko Schneider, 858-759-2640

SAN DIEGO GUITO GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 9:30 a.m. Social; 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon Meeting
Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas
More Information: Rita Koczela, president, 760-436-3036, www.sdge119micro.com

MISSION HILLS GARDEN CLUB MEETING

When: 6:00 p.m.
Where: United Church of Christ, 4070 Jackdaw St., San Diego
More information: www.missionhillsgardenclub.org

Gardening Classes

WALTER ANDERSEN NURSERY, PT. LOMA GARDENING CLASS

Learn a variety of gardening tricks every Saturday morning by attending a free class at Walter Andersen Nursery's Pt. Loma Nursery. Please contact the store for a schedule of events.
When: 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., every Saturday
Where: Walter Andersen's Pt. Loma, 3642 Enterprise St., San Diego
More information: www.walterandersen.com

WALTER ANDERSEN NURSERY, POWAY GARDENING CLASS

Come join others at Walter Andersen's Poway store for a free, weekly seasonal garden lecture. Please contact the store for a schedule of events.
When: 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., every Saturday
Where: Walter Andersen's Poway, 12755 Danielson Court, Poway
More information: www.walterandersen.com

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN CLASSES

The Water Conservation Garden provides a number of entertaining, information-packed courses covering the most topical gardening topics and presented by skilled and knowledgeable experts. Please contact the Water Conservation Garden for program details and any applicable fees.
When: Contact for program-specific times.
Where: 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon
More information: www.thegarden.org; 619-660-0614, x10

Walks, Tours & Garden Events

SAGE AND SONGBIRDS FESTIVAL

Live butterfly release both days at noon, educational speakers, vendors of garden-related arts and crafts. Free
When: May 1 and 2, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Where: Viejas Outlet Center, 5005 Willow Rd., Alpine
More information: 619-445-8352; www.chirp.org

SAGE AND SONGBIRDS GARDEN TOUR

Visit 5 bird and butterfly friendly gardens, plus a raptor rehabilitation facility to observe owls, hawks, eagles and more. Proceeds benefit habitat education programs.
When: April 30 – May 2, Gardens open 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Where: Private Alpine homes
Cost: \$ 15; ticket includes admission to all six sites
More information: 619-445-8352, www.chirp.org

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN TOUR

Come and meet up at the Visitor's Center for a weekly tour of the San Diego Botanic Garden formerly known as Quail Botanical Gardens. No reservations required.
Free with admission.
When: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., every Saturday
Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas
More information: www.sdbgarden.org

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN; CHILDREN'S EVENTS

The Hamilton Children's Garden offers a number of events specially designed to entertain and educate children and their caregivers. Please contact San Diego Botanic Garden for a complete listing of their scheduled events.
When: Ongoing – contact for program-specific times.
Where: San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas
More information: www.sdbgarden.org

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN TOUR

Enjoy a docent-led tour of the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College.
When: Every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and every Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
Where: Water Conservation Garden, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon
More information: www.thegarden.org

CNPS NATIVE PLANT WALK

Join landscape architect and member of the CNPS San Diego Chapter Kay Stewart for a two-hour, easy walk into Tecolote Canyon and back. Along the way you'll study and learn about the plants. This guided walk is free, but may be canceled due to inclement weather or poor trail conditions.
When: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., first Sunday of the month
Where: Tecolote Canyon Nature Center, 5180 Tecolote Road, San Diego
More information: www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/parks/teclote.shtml, (858) 581-9959

SAN DIEGO CHINESE HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND GARDEN

Come visit the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum's exquisite Asian garden.
When: 10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday; 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Sunday
Where: San Diego Chinese Historical Museum and Garden, 404 3rd Ave., San Diego
More information: www.scdhm.org/garden

Balboa Park Events

SAN DIEGO ZOO

Visit the world famous San Diego Zoo for Plant Days and Orchid Odyssey.
When: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., third Friday of each month
Where: San Diego Zoo, 2920 Zoo Drive, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.sandiegozoo.com

SAN DIEGO JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

Enhance your well-being with a visit to this Japanese-style garden. There is a \$4 fee for adults, \$2.50 fee for Seniors (55+), children and military with I.D.
When: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday
Where: San Diego Japanese Friendship Garden, 2215 Pan American Road, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.niwa.org

BALBOA PARK OFFSHOOT TOURS

Learn about Balboa Park's plants as volunteer horticulturists lead visitors on free, one-hour themed walks. (Inclement weather and low-turnout cancels the tour.)
When: 10 a.m., every Saturday
Where: Balboa Park Visitor Center, 1549 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.balboapark.org

BALBOA PARK INTERPRETIVE WALKS

Join volunteer-guides on this free, history-oriented walk through Balboa Park.
When: 1:00 p.m., every Tuesday
Where: Balboa Park Visitor Center, 1549 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego
More information: www.balboapark.org

SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM CANYONEER WALKS

Join trained volunteer guides on a local canyon walks. There is a \$2 fee.
When: Times vary; check website for specific event details
Where: Locations vary; check website for specific event details
More information: www.sdmnh.org/canyoneers



SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION

Garden Center and Library – Founded in 1907

1650 El Prado #105, San Diego, CA 92101-1684 619-232-5762 Located in Casa del Prado, Room 105, Balboa Park
Under the sponsorship of the Park & Recreation Department, City of San Diego, California

Mission Statement: To promote the knowledge and appreciation of horticulture and floriculture in the San Diego region.

OBJECTIVES

1. To educate and encourage regional gardeners through lectures, classes, publications, scholarships and library resources.
2. To promote the use of regionally appropriate plants and gardening techniques, including natives and Mediterranean climate adapted plants.
3. To encourage, educate, and support floral design activities for personal and public display.
4. To advise and encourage leaders and the community in conservation and beautification of public and private spaces.
To network and support plant-interested groups and societies

GENERAL MEETINGS 2010

February 17

April 21

June 16

October 20

Casa del Prado, Room 101
Balboa Park, San Diego

OFFICERS

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Term 2009-2011

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Diane Maher

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Arrangers Guild Liaison

Suzanne Michel

AFFILIATES

CHIRP FOR GARDEN WILDLIFE, INC.

Exec. Director: Maureen Austin

President: Lisa Lomax

P. O. Box 532

Alpine, CA 91903-0532

619-445-8352

www.chirp.org

CORONADO FLORAL ASSOCIATION

President: Leslie Crawford

P. O. Box 180188

Coronado, CA 92178-0188

619-435-8079

www.coronadofloralassoc.org

FRIENDS OF BALBOA PARK

2125 Park Boulevard

San Diego, CA 92101

619-232-2282

www.friendsofbalboapark.org

FRIENDS OF THE HORTENSE MILLER GARDEN

P. O. Box 742

Laguna Beach, CA 92652-0742

949-499-5518

www.hortensemillergarden.org

FRIENDS OF THE MARSTON HOUSE

c/o SOHO

2476 San Diego Ave.

San Diego, CA 92110

619-297-9327

www.marstonhouse.org

Friends@marstonhouse.org

JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN BALBOA PARK

Contact: Luanne Kanzawa

2125 Park Blvd.

San Diego, CA 92101-4792

619-232-2721

www.niwa.org

PALOMAR DISTRICT CALIFORNIA GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

Director: Jane McKee

1276 Palomares Ct.

Fallbrook, CA 92078-1620

760-728-6373

palomardirector@aol.com

<http://palomardistrict.tripod.com>

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA LIBRARY

30902 La Promesa

Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2821

949-459-6094

Quail Botanical Gardens Foundation, Inc.

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN

President/CEO: Julian Duval

P. O. Box 230005

Encinitas, CA 92023-0005

760-436-3036

www.SDBGarden.org

SAN DIEGO BOTANICAL GARDEN FOUNDATION

President: Ed Hamilton

2125 Park Blvd.

San Diego, CA 92101-4792

619-234-8901

www.sdbgf.org

SAN DIEGO ZOO

Horticulture Department

P. O. Box 120551

San Diego, CA 92112-0551

619-231-1515 Ext. 4298

www.sandiegozoo.org

SEAWORLD OF CALIFORNIA

500 Sea World Dr.

San Diego, CA 92109-7904

619-222-6363

www.seaworld.com/sandiego

SERRA MESA BRANCH LIBRARY

9005 Aero Drive

San Diego, CA 92123-2312

858-573-1396

SOUTHWESTERN JUDGES COUNCIL

Chair: Sandi Lord

P. O. Box 876

Pauma Valley, CA 92061-0876

760-727-7614

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN

Executive Director: Marty Eberhardt

12122 Cuyamaca College Dr. West

El Cajon, CA 92019-4317

619-660-0614

info@thegarden.org

www.thegarden.org

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATES:

CLASSIC GARDENS
P. O. Box 2711
La Jolla, CA 92038-2711
858-459-0316

FLOWERS OF POINT LOMA
2170 Chatsworth Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92107-2423
619-223-5475

GRANGETTO'S FARM AND GARDEN SUPPLY
P. O. Box 463095
Escondido, CA 92046-3095
760-745-4671
www.grangettos.com

SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY
Contact: Darren Simon
4677 Overland Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123-1233
858-522-6600
www.sdcwa.org

SMALL SPACE CREATIONS
6333 Colgate Grove Way
San Diego, CA 92115-7217
619-981-3273
<http://smallspacecreations.com/>

JIM STELLUTI CONSULTING LANDSCAPE ARTIST
1928 Madison Ave.
San Diego, CA 92116-2722
619-298-7641

GARDEN CLUBS:

BERNARDO GARDENERS
President: Liliane Dickinson
P. O. Box 27179
San Diego, CA 92198-1179
858-672-2454
www.bernardogardeners.org

BONITA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
President: Leslie Schroeder
2476 Eagle Valley Dr.
Chula Vista, CA 91914-4019
619-987-9257

CARLSBAD GARDEN CLUB
President: Ellen McGrath-Thorp
Publicity: Mary Hassing
P. O. Box 626
Carlsbad, CA 92008
760-494-7774

CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB
President: Marilyn Saleny
P. O. Box 57
Chula Vista, CA 91912-1016
619-421-6072

CROWN GARDEN CLUB
President: Shannon Player
P. O. Box 180476
Coronado, CA 92178-0476
619-435-1746
www.crowngardenclub.org

DOS VALLES GARDEN CLUB
President: Carol Curcio
P. O. Box 123
Valley Center, CA 92082
760-751-2226
www.dosvallesgardenclub.org

FALLBROOK GARDEN CLUB
Co-Presidents: Connie Forest & Janice Phoenix
P. O. Box 1702
Fallbrook, CA 92088-1702
760-451-0792
www.fallbrookgardenclub.org

LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB
President: Jody Peterson
P. O. Box 2713
La Jolla, CA 92038
858-729-0711
Jodypete3522@gmail.com

MIRACOSTA HORT. CLUB OF OCEANSIDE
President: Louise Ortega
158 Carey Rd.
Oceanside, CA 92054
760-598-6571
www.gardencentral.org/californiagc/
miracosta

MISSION HILLS GARDEN CLUB
President: Scott Borden
Mission Hills Garden Club
3145 Brant St.
San Diego, CA 92103-5502
619-923-3624
www.missionhillsgardenclub.org

POINT LOMA GARDEN CLUB
President: Julie Hasl
P. O. Box 6382
San Diego, CA 92166
619-564-7036
www.plgc.org

POWAY VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
President: Emily Troxell
P. O. Box 27
Poway, CA 92074-0027
858-672-0459
http://powayvalleygardenclub.org/

RAMONA GARDEN CLUB
President: Georgie Suitor
P. O. Box 1412
Ramona, CA 92065
760-788-9876, Publicity & Programs
www.ramona-gardenclub.com

RANCHO SAN DIEGO GARDEN CLUB
Contact: Connie Beck
1077 Vista Madera
El Cajon, CA 92019
619-749-4059

RANCHO SANTA FE GARDEN CLUB
President: Hal Sexton
P. O. Box 483
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067-0483
858-756-1554
www.rsfgardenclub.org

SAN CARLOS GARDEN CLUB
President: Genny Deutsch
6796 Summit Ridge Way
San Diego, CA 92120
619-583-8008

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
President: Susi Torre-Bueno
P. O. Box 231869
Encinitas, CA 92023-1869
760-295-7089
www.sdihtsoc.org

SAN DIEGO GARDEN CLUB
President: Geri Thiraway
1105 Santa Madera Ct.
Solana Beach, CA 92075
858-755-3284
sdgc.klmmicro.com

TEMECULA VALLEY GARDEN CLUB
Co-Presidents: Sally Kirby and Starr Rausch
P. O. Box 1526
Temecula, CA 92593-1526
951-677-4895
www.temeculavalleygardenclub.org

VILLAGE GARDEN CLUB OF LA JOLLA
President: Nan Kaufman
4638 Alhambra St.
San Diego, CA 92107-4021
619-225-8349
www.villagegardencluboflajolla.com

VISTA GARDEN CLUB
President: Lynn Paine
P. O. Box 44
Vista, CA 92085-0044
760-630-0383
www.vistagardenclub.org

IKEBANA SCHOOLS:

ICHIYO SCHOOL OF IKEBANA, SAN DIEGO CHAPTER
President: Deborah Warriner
633 Alameda Blvd.
Coronado, CA 92110
619-435-9712

IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER 119
President: Hiroko Fukuhara
P. O. Box 2248
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067-2248
858-673-3635
hiropan8@san.rr.com

KENOBO CHAPTER OF SAN DIEGO
President: Mrs. Charles Oehler
2822 Walker Dr.
San Diego, CA 92123-3056
858-278-5689
www.sandiegoyun.com

OHARA SCHOOL OF IKEBANA LA JOLLA CHAPTER
P. O. Box 195
Solana Beach, CA 92075
858-672-7850

SOGETSU SCHOOL OF IKEBANA SAN DIEGO BRANCH
Director: Hiroko Szechinski
10830 Montego Dr.
San Diego, CA 92124-1421
858-571-6137

SOGETSU SCHOOL OF IKEBANA
Master Instructor: Sumiko Lahey
2829 Flax Dr.
San Diego, CA 92154-2160
619-429-6198

PLANT SOCIETIES:

AFRICAN VIOLET

CARLSBAD AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY
President: Patty Regan
2000 S. Melrose Dr., #119
Vista, CA 92081
760-295-0484

BEGONIA

MARGARET LEE BRANCH AMERICAN BEGONIA SOCIETY
President: Michael Ludwig
6040 Upland St.
San Diego, CA 92114-1933
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In Season

Here are some items that you may find being sold from the stalls at your local Farmers' Market in March and April. (For more information on San Diego County Farmers' Markets, visit www.sdfarmbureau.org.)

March: Artichokes, asparagus, avocados, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chard, cherimoyas, grapefruit, guavas, herbs, kale, kiwi, lemons, lettuce, limes, navel oranges, peas, potatoes, radishes, rhubarb, snap peas, spinach, strawberries, tangelos, tangerines, white turnips, winter squash and various cut flowers.

April: Avocados, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chard, cherimoyas, cucumbers, grapefruit, guavas, herbs, kale, kiwi, lemons, limes, lettuce, navel oranges, onions, peas, potatoes, radishes, scallions, snap peas, spinach, strawberries, tangelos, white turnips, Valencia Oranges and various cut flowers.



Photo: Rachel Cobb

Contact Us! Do you have an event, class or meeting that you'd like to let *California Garden* readers know about? If so, please email sdfioral@gmail.com or Denise Thompson at EarthD@sanrr.com with your group's name, the meeting date and time, meeting place, any applicable fees, event program and contact information. You may also submit the above information via regular mail, sent to Calendar Editor, San Diego Floral Association, 1650 El Prado Room 105, San Diego, CA 92101. Space is limited, so please get in touch today to ensure inclusion! The deadline for the upcoming May/June 2010 issue is March 10, 2010; the deadline for the Jul/Aug 2010 issue is May 10, 2010.

From The Archives of California Garden

Houseplants were essential home décor in the 1970s. When all her common houseplants died, Barbara Rojas grew an indoor tomato plant named Pixie. Did she know that American colonists grew tomatoes only as ornamentals because they thought the fruit poisonous? Perhaps she was a romantic, familiar with the time when tomatoes were called "love apples" and believed to be an aphrodisiac. California Garden carried stories on the indoor tomato and tomato trees, a tropical species, distinct from the garden tomato, and capable of reaching eight feet in height.

—Nancy Carol Carter



March-April 1973 Tomatoes in the Living Room

by Barbara B. Rojas

For many years, I have admired and secretly envied people whose homes boasted an ivy-covered window sill or an elegant collection of African Violets on the coffee table. Even the Philodendron and Rubber Plant in my doctor's office made me feel insecure. (Modesty aside, I have two green thumbs when gardening outdoors - my definition of a green thumb being one who selects the right plant for the right location and proceeds to care for it in the right way.) However, my verdant appendages--chameleon like--became brown when I tried growing plants indoors. African Violets? The continent would never have willingly lent its name to my poor specimens.

TREE TOMATO



**GROW INDOORS
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Ivy and Philodendrons? Disaster! In desperation, I bought an Air Fern. Within weeks, its vibrant green color turned to pale chartreuse and finally matched our beige walls.

In January, my husband brought me a tomato plant in a four inch pot and said, "Babsy, this is a new kind of tomato plant. It can be grown in the house." I flinched visibly.

Catching the wild look in my eyes he hurriedly added, "Think of it as an experiment, something just for fun." ...

First I found out all I could about my new plant ... a PIXIE, dwarf hybrid. After selecting a bright red glazed, eight inch pot with adequate draining hole, I planted PIXIE in a commercial potting mixture--strictly first class for this plant. Something to use as a pot base posed a problem until I thought of my glass pie pan. (I bake pies about twice a year and knew I would never miss the pan.)

Sitting on the floor by an inside wall, PIXIE is scooted across the carpet every day to get sunlight. On warm windless days, I take the plant outside, but I bring it in before evening. Realizing that over-watering is the most common cause of failure with house plants, PIXIE is watered about once a week or whenever the soil is dry to the touch.

To date, there are two large tomatoes and three smaller ones in various stages of ripening. Blossoms and healthy new leaf growth predict a good future harvest, but my change in attitude toward house plants is the biggest accomplishment. Replete with confidence and no longer afraid of failure, I may even try another Air Fern.

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 April 10 th Bluegrass Day	 April 24 th Red Hat Ladies Day
 April 10-11 & 17-18 Arts & Crafts Fairs	 May 1 st Spring Rose Show
 April 17 th Blues Day	 May 8 th -9 th Bonsai Show & Sale
 April 18 th Photo Workshop	 May 9 th Mother's Day



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